No. 65.

THE

CHRISTIAN EXAMINER

AND

GENERAL REVIEW.

NEW SERIES — NO. XXXV.

NOVEMBER, 1834.

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THE

CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

No. LXV.

NEW SERIES — No. XXXV.

NOVEMBER, 1834.

ART. I. — *The Christian Advocate for November*, 1833, *and January*, 1834. — *Review of Letters to Presbyterians, by Samuel Miller*, D. D. Philadelphia.

MOST of our readers are acquainted, we presume, with the nature and organization of the Presbyterian Church of the United States. They are aware that it professes to unite the whole sect in one homogeneous mass, by the adoption of a common creed, and a distribution of the whole body into local Presbyteries, the combination of these into Synods, and the subjection of all to the General Assembly; which is composed of representatives from these inferior bodies, and thus constitutes a kind of appellate court or supreme judicature over the whole. The meetings of this latter are annual, and holden at Philadelphia; where all causes from the inferior bodies are heard on appeal, and all affairs relating to the general welfare are discussed. This organized body has now been in existence nearly a hundred and thirty years; and like all things human it has seen its vicissitudes of prosperity and trouble. It has had its periods of great activity and zeal, as for instance about the time of the regular establishment of Episcopacy in America; and then again it has relapsed into a comparative quiet and inaction. One thing amid all mutations they have preserved the same — their creed. That was settled for them by the Divines at Westminster. To this, all who are admitted into their body must subscribe, and agree to interpret the Scriptures as they were interpreted by the great lights of the Reformation. How far subscription to a creed has had the effect of producing

uniformity of belief, we shall be better able to judge by the developements of this review.

That the Presbyterian Church should have been unaffected by the religious *mouvement* of the last fifteen years, was not to be expected. Rumors have been abroad, indeed it has been a matter of general notoriety, that the Church has been disturbed by what some are pleased to style *a new Theology*. New doctrines, it is said, have been introduced into it, in the opinion of many, entirely subversive of their ancient faith. The matter has been going on from bad to worse till it has alarmed the watchful, and aroused them to make a stand against such profane innovations. Not only has there been a great declension in doctrine, but likewise a sad falling off in discipline. The decrees of Presbyteries and Synods have become a mere *brutum fulmen*, alarming only to the weakest nerves. In saying this, however, we only anticipate the disclosures of the review before us.

It has been supposed that the onward progress of religious opinions was confined in a great measure to New England. This we believe was the general impression. It was ours; and it was not until we took up by chance the review under consideration, that we became aware that it had pervaded the whole extent of the Union. We could not still have believed it, had it come from any other source. But Dr. Green we consider the very best authority. He is one of the oldest members of the church to which he belongs. Near a half-century ago he was settled over a church in Philadelphia, to which he ministered for some years. Afterwards he was chosen President of Princeton College. This situation he likewise retained many years, but finally retiring from office, he is passing the evening of his days in Philadelphia as the editor of the Christian Advocate. No man has had a better opportunity to know, or knows, more of the affairs of his denomination than Dr. Green. He can look back to the time when the Assembly's Catechism swayed an undisputed sceptre over the realms of Presbyterianism. So supremely dear and precious were the doctrinal standards of his church to him, that, on resigning the pastoral care of the church to which he had ministered, he exhorts his former hearers in the following terms. "Nothing will contribute more to your being at peace among yourselves, both when vacant and at other times, than keeping strictly to the principles

and forms of the Presbyterian Church. By these standards try carefully all doctrines, and conduct scrupulously all your proceedings. Esteem it no hardship or oppression, — esteem it as an unspeakable privilege and advantage that these standards are given you for your direction and control." In a note it is added, "I would recommend that every family make it a point of Christian duty to keep a copy of our Confession of Faith." Little did he think when he wrote this, that he should so soon be called to sing the requiem of the creed he so unceremoniously puts in the place of the Bible.

But times have strangely changed between the youth and age of one man. Not only have men's opinions changed, but the very forms of the Church are fading away. Presbyterianism, to use his own language, has been *Congregationalized*. Its organization is retained, but its spirit and power are fled.

The occasion, on which this great declension became manifest, was this. Mr. Albert Barnes, of their connexion and lately settled in Philadelphia, had indulged himself in some speculations on human depravity and freedom, which were thought by some to have an awful leaning towards liberality. Complaint was entered against him, and carried before the General Assembly. Greatly to the astonishment of the Old School party, it was found that it was very doubtful whether a majority of the Assembly could be brought to convict the accused of heresy; thus making it evident that the leprosy had spread much farther than was supposed. The venerable champions of Orthodoxy were taken wholly by surprise. They could neither advance with success, nor retreat with honor. Dr. Miller, who seems to have been endowed with one Apostolic gift at least, — the wisdom of the serpent, proposed that the case should be discussed *in thesi*, that is, abstractly, or *supposing such a case might have happened*. The two parties seem to have agreed to consider it a drawn battle, and the matter was hushed up by being referred to a committee *judiciously chosen*, and thus the evil day was for a while put off.

This event opened the eyes of the sagacious to the perilous condition of the whole church. Dr. Miller, whose patriarchal care of his own denomination is well known, followed up his attempt in the Assembly to keep the peace, by pub-

lishing a series of *Letters to Presbyterians on the Present Crisis of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.* In these letters he attempts to show, that "nineteen twentieths of the whole number of our ministers are sufficiently near to the Scriptures, and to each other, in respect to all the essentials of truth, to be comfortably united in Christian fellowship and coöperation." Dr. Green undertakes to review those Letters, and to dissent from this proposition altogether. The differences according to him are radical, fundamental, and altogether irreconcilable. Before, however, we produce his reasons for this opinion, we shall quote a few passages of his exposition of the causes which have led to the prostration of the discipline of the church. These were the gradual admixture of Congregational elements in the great mass, and the organization and efforts of Missionary and Education Societies.

"In the mean time, the necessities of the church, especially on the frontiers of the country, and the comparative facility of obtaining Congregational ministers from New England, contrasted with the difficulty of obtaining them in the Presbyterian church, brought in a large number of pastors, of Congregational education and partialities; some of whom were permitted to be enrolled in presbyteries without even a formal adoption of the Standards of the church. The criminal desire of having a *large* church, rather than a *pure* and harmonious one, seemed to obtain a general prevalence; so that an offered addition of members and territory was too readily accepted, without examining into the fitness of the proposed auxiliaries, or associates, to be admitted to the privileges and immunities which were conceded to them. * * *

"Missionary and educational associations, moreover, had much influence, in giving the present Congregational complexion and character to the Presbyterian church.

"The result of the combined influence of the causes which we have now indicated, and of others of less magnitude to which we might advert, has been, to leave our church but little more of its Presbyterian character than its name and its forms. We now regard it as *practically* a Presbyterio-Congregationalist church; — from the General Assembly, down to the church session, we are *Congregationalized.* Strict Presbyterianism is considered and represented as bigotry and narrow-mindedness, and as indicative of the want of charitable feelings, as well as of a liberal mind.

"That we might show in the most unexceptionable manner,

the ill effects which have always resulted from the admixture of the heterogeneous elements of Congregationalism and Presbyterianism, and the comparatively peaceful, happy, and prosperous state of our church, when it has kept strictly to its true and avowed principles, we have examined its records from its origin to the present time. This has been our scope through the whole; although, from a belief that it would gratify at least a portion of our readers, we have interwoven a larger portion of our ecclesiastical history than was always necessary to our main purpose, and far more than we at first intended.

"It is now very nearly a hundred and thirty years, since the first organization of the Presbyterian church in our country. The thirty years which elapsed, from the union of the Synods of New York and Philadelphia till the formation of the General Assembly, were the halcyon days of our church; and the manifest reason was, because its forms, doctrine, and discipline, during this period, were most exactly maintained and regarded: And it has been with a kind of mournful pleasure that we have observed, while attentively reading the ancient records, the blessed effects, — the unanimity, the peace, the purity, and the prosperity, — which resulted from keeping closely and conscientiously, during this period, to the prescriptions and forms of our acknowledged standards, — a pleasure rendered mournful, by comparing this felicitous state with the discontents, divisions, relaxation of discipline, and loss of confidence in church judicatures, which the same records show have so often occurred from the collision of Presbyterianism and Congregationalism, during the remaining *century* of our ecclesiastical existence; and which at no former period have been half as great as they are at present.

"Much has been lately said, beside what is said in the letters under review, of preserving the unity, and healing the existing divisions, of the Presbyterian church. Let it be remembered that wounds can never be truly and permanently healed, while a portion of that which was their cause remains at the bottom of them, unextracted. A grievous departure from the standards of our church, in doctrine, government, and discipline, — it is our solemn conviction, — is the main cause of all the evils that afflict us. If our government and discipline were restored, false doctrine might be banished; — till this restoration takes place, nothing effectual can be done. But government and discipline will never be restored, while Congregationalism retains its present influence and predominancy among us. This is the *radical* evil, and till it be removed it is as vain to attempt the restoration of the Presbyterian church to peace, purity, and order, as it is to expect to

make a tree fruitful and flourishing, by pruning and training its branches, while a worm is constantly corroding its root. * * *

"The evils, it should be remembered, which have now risen to such a formidable height, came in, for a considerable time, by gradual advances; so that it is not easy to fix the precise period when the existing danger ought to have produced alarm, and a determined effort to arrest its progress, and to expel it from the ground it had already gained. But for ten years past, at least, the danger has been such, that it seems to us that those who have not seen it, are justly chargeable with wilful blindness, or criminal inattention. Within that period, we have not a doubt, that many individuals have not only seen it, but have knowingly, and with design, endeavoured to promote it, — not, we would hope, recognising it as *an evil;* but thinking rather that it was *a good thing*, — a good thing to break down those fences, which the bigotry and narrow-mindedness of a gone-by age, of comparative ignorance, had erected to stop the march of mind, impede the progress of improvement, and prevent men of liberal minds and noble enterprise from doing and saying whatever they might please, in projecting and promoting grand schemes of reformation, calculated eventually to revolutionize the world. Now, we are willing to leave it to others to decide the point of casuistry, — which of two classes is the more criminal; that which is composed of those who *actively* do wrong, or that formed of those who *stand by and permit it*, when they might and ought to prevent its being done. In our estimation, both are inexcusably blamable, notwithstanding they may plead that they mean 'to do God service.' The Congregationalists, and *quasi* Presbyterians, have been to blame for prostrating the barriers, and disregarding the constitutional prescriptions, of the Presbyterian church; and the real Presbyterians, who truly love the constitution and all its provisions, have been to blame, for not resisting and preventing, as once they certainly might, the inroads and devastations of the Congregational invaders. * * *

"So far as our observation has extended, our Congregations are much disposed to trench on the prerogatives of their Sessions; disposed, in certain cases, to assume to themselves the powers which they have delegated to their elders; and to order their affairs much as is done in Congregational churches; and the Sessions are often, we believe through timidity, inefficient in sustaining the order and purity of the church. They are afraid of becoming unpopular, and are willing to adopt the common notion, that it is best to let irregularities alone, or only to say they disapprove of them, and hope they will be amended: and that to do more than this will be regarded as

carrying things with a high hand. Presbyteries often act on much the same plan. They attend to their stated business; but as to taking care that discipline is maintained in the churches under their care, or exercising discipline on their own members for preaching unsound doctrines, or for almost any thing short of gross immorality, it is seldom attempted; and when attempted, it is in great danger of being rendered abortive, by those who dislike the attempt. The difficulty of carrying through a disciplinary proceeding, discourages and enfeebles those who would readily take part in it, but for the opposition they know they will have to encounter; and the probability that, even if they are successful in the courts below, what they do will be undone by a higher judicatory. In the mean time, the lawful prescriptions of the higher judicatories are often set at nought. It is not long since we heard it gravely maintained in a Presbytery, that a plain, and positive, and strictly constitutional act of the General Assembly, directing what was to be done in a specified case, was to be considered only in the light of a *recommendation*, which might be regarded or disregarded, as the parties concerned might choose. This was pure Congregationalism. As to Synods, who does not know that a sermon was not long since preached at the opening of a Synod, and afterwards published, in which one of the most important articles in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms was directly and violently impugned, and yet no notice was taken of it by the Synod, or by any other judicature. The time was, when the preacher of such a sermon would have been arraigned, within half a day after he was out of the pulpit. That the General Assembly of 1831 was completely Congregationalized, in disposing of the case of Mr. Barnes, has been shown by Mr. Bacon, in his letter to us, in a statement as true as it is taunting. And ever since that period, the supreme judicatory of our church, instead of a straight-forward proceeding, agreeably to the principles and forms of the constitution of the Presbyterian church, has tried to settle difficulties and controversies in the Congregational way of compromise; in which something like concession is awarded to both parties, and, under color of promoting peace, materials for prolonged, and perhaps incurable alienations, are furnished. In a word, the forms of the Presbyterian church are now sometimes used to take vengeance on an obnoxious individual, and at others to protect a favorite; and when neither of these objects is in view, or something may be promoted by the suspending of all discipline, discipline is permitted to sleep. We do not say that this is invariably or generally done; but we do say that there are instances of this kind, and that the evil has reached so far as to impair confidence in

church judicatories; and to fill reflecting minds with a painful uncertainty of what is to be the destiny of our church, in a short time to come. It is a fact too notorious to be denied, that doctrines vitally affecting the whole evangelical system, and directly contradictory to those laid down in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, are both preached and published without fear, or cause of fear, that their advocates and propagators will be visited with the discipline of the church. Now, we hold it to be a moral evil of a flagrant and reproachful kind, for a church, as well as for an individual, to violate or disregard a public profession. The Standards of our church are her solemn Confession and Profession, before the world; and it is a species of dishonesty, offensive to God, and to all men of upright minds and honorable principles, to profess one thing and practise another, — or *not* to practise agreeably to what we profess. The course we are pursuing is exactly that which has been run by the Calvinistic and Lutheran churches of Switzerland and Germany. In those countries, the Formularies adopted at, or shortly after, the Protestant reformation, remain to this day unchanged, — unchanged, as the ostensible creed and symbols of ecclesiastical order, of Unitarians and Neologists. We are rapidly tending to the same goal, and if, in the mercy of God, we are not arrested, we shall as surely reach it, as that like causes produce like effects." — *Christian Advocate for Nov.* 1833, pp. 500 – 507.

As to the tendency of the Presbyterian body to Unitarianism, we are as little disposed to deny as to lament it. Believing as we do that this is the point at which all honest inquiry must end, we do not consider the progress toward it as an evidence of great corruption in the church, but rather as an indication of growing candor and industry, — a deeper reverence for truth above the commandments of men.

As to causes of the decline of ecclesiastical power, which the Doctor pathetically bewails, we are inclined to adopt a different explanation. What he would consider the disease, we should regard as only a symptom. The strong undercurrent which is setting against Presbyterianism, and bearing away its landmarks, is not Congregationalism, or Missionary, or Education Societies. It is the stern republicanism of our institutions, and the free spirit of personal and independent inquiry which distinguishes this age. Here all power resides in the people. All our institutions must therefore be democratic, we mean of course in the good sense of the term. Any thing of a contrary character,

whatever imposing names or forms it may assume, whether of Presbytery or Bishop, is the mere shadow without the substance. The power of the Presbyterian Church *was* formidable — till it was attempted to be exercised, — then it became ridiculous. It might have existed a while longer, had it not been incautiously used. They tried it in Baltimore. But there they ruined their machinery by attempting to break down too hard a substance. They undertook to discipline Mr. Duncan for preaching against creeds. They tried to excommunicate him, and turn him out of his church. But so far were they from succeeding, that he fairly turned the tables upon them, and (as one of them afterwards facetiously confessed) *excommunicated them.* His congregation went with him, and instead of gaining a victory, they lost a church. Since then, in the words of Dr. Green, "discipline has been permitted to sleep."

We now come to notice the deplorable apostasy in doctrines of which the Doctor complains.

"In chapter vi. sec. iii. and iv. of our Confession of Faith, it is said, speaking of the fall of our first parents, and of their sin, — 'They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.' In chapter vii. sec. ii. it is stated, — 'The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.' In questions 12, 16, 18, of our Shorter Catechism (to save space we omit the fuller statement of the Larger Catechism) we read as follows, — 'When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience. The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression. The sinfulness of that estate, whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin.' The eighty-second question and answer of this Catechism are as follows: — '*Q.* Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God? *A.* No mere man since the fall, is able, in this life perfectly to keep

the commandments of God, but daily doth break them, in thought, word, and deed.'

"Let our readers mark well how many direct contradictions of the above extracts from the public authoritative Standards of our church, are at present publicly avowed, orally and in print, by ministers in the Presbyterian church, who have solemnly adopted those Standards at their licensure or ordination. (1.) It is explicitly and repeatedly stated, in the foregoing extracts, — 'That the first covenant made with man, was a covenant of works,' — that it was 'made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity.' But it is now denied that there ever was a covenant of works made with Adam, either for himself or his posterity. All the errors under this general head unavoidably involve this denial, — whether made in explicit terms or not. The federal headship of Adam is discarded as an antiquated notion. (2.) It is explicitly declared, in speaking of the sin of our first parents, that — 'They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was *imputed*.' At present, in the Presbyterian church, the imputation of Adam's first sin to his posterity, is absolutely scorned. We will not say that 'nineteen-twentieths' of our clergy reject it, but we do seriously fear that at least a moiety of them disbelieve it. (3.) It is unequivocally declared in the Confession and Catechism, that 'the same death in sin and corrupted nature [of our first parents was] conveyed to all their posterity,' — that 'the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin.' These positions of our Standards are denied as openly and positively, although we hope not quite so generally, as that of the immediately preceding item. In regard to the quotation from the Catechism, we heard a clergyman in the Synod to which we belong, on being asked, before the Synod, if he believed it, answer categorically, 'I do not.' (4.) It is stated in the above questions from our Standards, that — 'From this original corruption [derived from our first parents] we are utterly indisposed, *disabled*, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil,' — and that 'this corruption of his [man's] whole nature is commonly called original sin.' This fundamental point in Christian theology, for which all the Reformers contended (and none so earnestly and ably as Calvin), which is called in some Formularies, 'Birth sin,' and in ours, as we have just seen, 'Original sin,' is now violently impugned and totally set aside, by not a few religious teachers, in both the Presbyterian and Congregational churches. Taking ground on some dogmas of their 'philoso-

phy, falsely so called,' they maintain that 'all sin consists in voluntary action, — in man's *own act of* CHOICE;' and consequently that infants, before they are capable of discerning good and evil as the objects of *choice*, are perfectly free from sin; as destitute of any moral taint as Adam was at his first creation, — from whom, it is maintained, they inherit no corruption whatever, and to whom they sustain no other relation, than that which every infant now bears to his father. This is Pelagianism of the highest kind; and it is rampant, and spreading like a leprosy, in many portions of the Presbyterian church. (5.) Our quotation from the Confession of Faith affirms, that by man's 'original corruption' he is utterly '*disabled* to all good,' as well as 'made opposite' to it, and 'inclined to all evil:' And the Catechism teaches, that 'no mere man since the fall is *able*, in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God.' Now it has even become fashionable to deny this outright, — to maintain that man has natural ability to keep all the commandments of God, and to keep them perfectly. We have not long since seen it stated in print, by a Presbyterian minister, that Satan never invented a more successful artifice to ruin souls, than the preaching of the very doctrine of our Standards, — the natural inability of unsanctified men to obey the commandments of God.

"II. As our Confession of Faith and Catechisms teach the entire corruption, depravity, and impotence of man in his natural state, so they hold forth with equal clearness and explicitness, that his recovery to holiness and the divine favor, is wholly from the power and free grace of God. It is said, Confession of Faith, chap. vi. sec. iii., that 'Man by his fall, having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the Covenant of Grace, — promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto life his Holy Spirit, to make them willing and *able* to believe.' And in the Larger Catechism, in answer to the sixty-seventh question, it is affirmed that 'Effectual calling is the work of God's almighty power and grace, whereby — he doth in his accepted time, invite and draw them [the elect] to Jesus Christ, by his word and Spirit; savingly enlightening their minds, renewing and powerfully determining their wills, so as they (although in themselves dead in sin) are hereby made willing and *able*, freely to answer his call, and to accept and embrace the grace offered and conveyed therein.' We omit the answer to the question on effectual calling in the Shorter Catechism, which is of the same import as that here recited.

"The foregoing doctrine of our Confession of Faith and

Catechisms notwithstanding, we have heard a sermon from a Presbyterian minister, the avowed purport of which was to show, *what* God had done for the salvation of man, and that he had done *all* that was necessary and proper to be done; and yet the gift and work of the Holy Spirit was not mentioned, or alluded to, from the beginning to the end of the discourse. It was not intimated in all that was said, that in the great concern of renovation, and the acceptance of Christ as he is freely offered in the gospel, man needed the quickening influence and the special aid of the Spirit of all grace, — nor indeed any assistance whatever, beyond the proper exercise of his own powers. That man is essentially active in *regeneration*, — in regeneration strictly considered, and as distinguished from *conversion*, — is both proclaimed and printed; although our Standards explicitly declare that he is 'dead in sin.' In fact, the *effective*, and often, we believe, the *intended* impression, made on the minds of their hearers, by the preachers to whom we refer, is, that men are fully able to convert themselves, without any other divine aid than what every man, under the light of the gospel, already possesses. — They are told that they can and ought to *will* it; and if they do, they will go away renewed in the temper of their minds. We have been credibly and recently informed, that a Presbyterian minister said, — we understood, *publicly* said, — that we ought not to pray that God would convert sinners, but that he would convince them, that they can convert themselves. And indeed this is only putting into words, the system which is substantially taught and inculcated, by the whole class of preachers and writers to whom we here refer.

"III. In the chapter on justification, in the Confession of Faith (chap. xi. sec. i.) it is said, — 'Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth, — by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.' Again; in the iii. sec. of this chapter we are taught that 'Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf.' In both the Catechisms the same doctrine is clearly laid down. — We quote only the Larger Catechism: '*Question* 70. What is justification? *A.* Justification is an act of God's free grace unto sinners, in which he pardoneth all their sins and accounteth their persons righteous in his sight; not for any thing wrought in them or done by them, but only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to them, and received by faith alone.'

"Now, there are preachers and writers in the Presbyterian church, who, if they had distinctly intended to gainsay almost every idea contained in the essential article of our Creed, as stated above, could scarcely have done it more effectually and explicitly, than they have studiously attempted to do. According to them, the *atonement* (a word not found in the *doctrinal* part of the Standards of our church) did not consist in 'Christ, by his obedience and death, fully discharging the debt of all those that are justified; and by making a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf.' All this is most unequivocally denied. It is explicitly asserted that Christ did not endure the penalty of the violated law of God, in behalf of his people; and of course did not discharge their debt, — that the atonement is merely an exhibition of the displeasure or wrath of God against sin, and was made for all mankind alike and equally; was an offering made for the race; did not by itself secure the salvation of any one; and consequently did not make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to the justice of God in behalf of all those that are saved; for these men profess to reject the doctrine of universal salvation. In a word, all ideas of *substitution*, or that Christ took the sinner's place, and obeyed and suffered in the room and stead of his people, are completely, and by some indignantly, rejected. And as to his righteousness, — consisting of his active obedience to the law of God, and passive endurance of the penalty, — being *imputed* to his people, as the meritorious cause of their justification, it is regarded and treated as an absurdity, and even as an impossibility. The old orthodox terms, of *atonement*, *justification*, and the *righteousness of Christ*, are retained; for what purpose we know not, if it is not to blind the populace, and leave them impressed with the belief that there is no real difference between the sentiments of these men and their orthodox brethren." — *Christian Advocate for Jan.* 1834, pp. 30 – 33.

Here we have the old and ominous charge of concealment and deception, so rife a few years ago against the Unitarians of New England. And if we had not seen the title of the book we should be almost persuaded that we were reading a Number of the Panoplist for 1815 or 1816. And if, as our reviewer says, "like causes produce like effects," the whole Presbyterian Church are within fifteen or twenty years of downright Unitarianism. He goes on to show that there is not only an apparent, but a real, radical difference between the two parties.

"We wish to be understood, that a principal part of our

purpose, in making the exhibit that we are now closing, is, to let our readers see what is the *doctrinal* difference between the parties that now divide and distract the Presbyterian church. Let them look at it and consider it well: And when they have done so, we ask

"1. Is there not only a *real*, but a *wide* difference? To us it does seem, after the most serious and impartial view that we have been able to take of the whole matter, that here are *two systems*, — two systems which, in their characteristic features, are directly opposed to each other. If we understand the doctrinal system of our Confessions of Faith and Catechisms, the principle of IMPUTATION is fundamental, and essential to the whole. Deny the imputation of Adam's covenant-breaking sin, with its consequences, (as specified in our Standards) to all his posterity; deny the imputation of the sins of believers to their Surety Saviour, and the full satisfaction which, when imputed, he made for their sins, to divine law and justice; and deny the imputation of the finished righteousness of Christ to his people, for their justification before God, and their title to eternal life, — and you deny a very large part of the very essence of the doctrinal standards of our church. But the party contemplated do unequivocally deny all this; as well as the other fundamental principle of regeneration, as being *exclusively* the work of the Holy Spirit. The most frank and candid among them will tell you so expressly. Question them on each of the points to which imputation applies, as stated above, and they will tell you, that they do not hold this, that, or the other. Yet they will preach, after all, in such a manner, as to lead the people to believe, and many of their ministerial brethren to believe, that they cannot be far wrong, — that the most of the difference between them and their brethren, is only a difference in language, — a dispute about words, — that in reality they all think alike, — or as Professor M. has it 'are sufficiently near to the Scriptures and to each other, in respect to all the essentials of truth, to be comfortably united in Christian fellowship and coöperation.' Great was the delight which this declaration gave to the whole party. It was the very thing which they wished, and which they still wish and labor to have believed. It gained an admission of the letter which contained it, and a few of the succeeding ones, into their periodicals. But they found, after a while, that they must treat the Professor pretty much as a Quaker preacher treated Whitfield, when he had spoken a short time in one of their meetings, — 'Friend George,' said the Quaker interrupting him, 'I think thee has said *about enough*,' — and so no more of the Professor's letters, so far as we have seen or heard, have appeared in any of their papers.

"2. Is it credible that 'nineteen-twentieths of the ministers of the Presbyterian church, are sufficiently agreed in all the essentials of truth, to be comfortably united in Christian fellowship and coöperation?' We take it for granted, not only from what we personally know of Professor M., but from what he says in immediate connexion with the quoted passage, that those who materially disagree, in relation to the points which we have exhibited from the Constitution of our church, cannot be comfortably united in Christian fellowship and coöperation. It follows, necessarily, that his estimate is, that not more than one in twenty of our ministers, hold the obnoxious system which we have endeavoured to expose. Now, without stating any calculation of our own, we shall offer a few reasons briefly, why we think the Professor's estimate must be exceedingly erroneous. We first mention the free and fearless manner in which the advocates of unsound doctrine preach and publish their opinions. Would they do this, if they were not well assured, that far more than one in twenty are prepared to stand by them? Or if they would still state, preach, and print as they do, *could* they do it, without suffering discipline? No, assuredly. — They well know that there is *a large party*, — in the General Assembly of the church, probably *a majority*, — who, either through fellowship with their errors, or reluctance to offend those who are in such fellowship, will see them safe and sound through any jeopardy into which the orthodox may endeavour to bring them. Again. Look at the Theological Seminaries in our land, that send forth their pupils to become, and who actually and immediately become, ministers in the Presbyterian church. Are nineteen-twentieths of these, substantially sound in the faith? Have the professors of the Seminary in which Dr. M. sustains his office, been able to prevent many of their pupils from maintaining and advocating, through their whole course, several of the obnoxious sentiments to which we have adverted; and from preaching and publishing them, after they have left the institution? We know they have not. But let us not be misunderstood. We believe the professors in that Seminary have honestly and faithfully labored to embue the minds of their pupils with sound doctrine; and that they sincerely lament that they have too often labored in vain. We firmly believe the evil arises from the minds of some of the youth being so preoccupied with wrong views before they enter the Seminary, and from knowing that popular opinion is much in their favor, that they can neither be convinced of their errors from all the lectures they hear, nor restrained from defending, and even endeavouring to propagate them, in the institution: And others, who leave the

Seminary, apparently and avowedly sound in the faith, find so many clergymen opposed to their sentiments, and the popular current in the places where they are located so strongly set against them, that at length they yield and swim with the tide. Could this take place, to half the extent to which it has taken place, if nineteen-twentieths of our ministers were substantially orthodox? We are confident it could not. Once more, and finally. — Whether it is known to Professor M. or not, it is known to us, that on one side there are strong hopes, and on the other side strong fears, that in the event of the death of any one of the present professors of the Princeton Seminary, a man of the same, or similar theological tenets with the defunct, could not be chosen in his place. 'Nineteen-twentieths' of our clergy substantially sound in the faith, when this is the case! Impossible. — We fear that even a majority will not be found so, or not found so with sufficient firmness and decision, whenever another professor is to be elected in that Seminary. We are ready to weep over the prospect; although it is probable we shall not live to see the event. Our duty, we think, consists in making known the danger, that measures may, if possible, be taken to prevent its being realized." — pp. 33–35.

Dr. Green's worst anticipations appear to have been realized. We learn that the question between the New and Old Schools was brought up this year, and decided *against* their creed by a vote of about ninety to eighty. Thus we have the spectacle of one of the largest sects in Christendom, condemning their own Standards of Faith.

Such then is the present state of the Presbyterian church in the United States. The reflections, which this condition of things suggests are highly curious, and most deeply interesting. It demonstrates for the hundredth time the utter worthlessness of creeds, either for the purpose of securing uniformity of faith, or of maintaining peace. It clearly shows that they are all that their worst enemies have declared them to be, snares to the conscience, instruments of oppression, and chains and fetters to the advancement of the human mind. Almost every sect has resorted to them, for the delusive purpose of binding what is necessarily free, human opinion. The Catholics tried them, to stop the thousand voices of heresy and schism. But the hoarse murmur grew deeper, and louder, and fiercer. The Protestants tried them after the Reformation, and almost every year has produced a new sect. The Episcopalians tried them, and

straightway a dispute arose, which has never been settled, whether their Articles are Arminian or Calvinistic. The Presbyterians have tried them, and now their creed remains as a landmark to show them where they *were*.

The present state of things is deeply interesting as an augury of the future. What are we coming to? This is a question easier asked than answered. One thing however is evident, that the whole Christian religion is to meet a crisis in these United States, such as it has never met before. The restraint of authority is gone. That of superstition is fast wearing away. The human mind, having conquered and explored every other province, is marching boldly on to that of religion, determined to leave no corner unsearched, even its most sacred recesses. The next twenty years are destined to witness a discussion of all topics connected with religion and the Bible, which has occurred in no country except Germany, and perhaps not even there. Every point will be tried, and stated, and defended, from the absurdest Orthodoxy, to the boldest Atheism. Wild speculation, fierce controversy, temporary skepticism, and in some instances, we hope not many, total shipwreck of faith, are inevitable. The heavens are blackening, the clouds rolling together, the winds are collecting their strength, and every thing shows that a tempest is nigh. But through the storm we think we can see a vista of light. We believe, that, while the mind boldly "tries all things," it obeys a law of its nature when it "holds fast that which is good." We believe that all this dispute is merely about externals, about the *envelope* of Christianity. It is about things "which perish with the using," which are demolished by the very act of submitting them to a rigid analysis. These things being disposed of, Christianity will be revealed in all its beautiful simplicity. It will come forth "as the sun shining in his strength." And men will wonder that they ever sought for it in metaphysical subtilties, or verbal criticism. John's Gospel will be read, not for the purpose of gathering sharp weapons for polemic warfare, but to unfold the deep realities of the inward, spiritual man. Paul will be studied, not to see how a learned Jew would illustrate and defend the Gospel; but how the most exalted intellect may be renewed, and sanctified, by "Christ and the resurrection."

For the Gospel we have no fears, for "it is founded on a rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

For Unitarianism we have no fears, for we have almost past through the trial, and, notwithstanding the predictions of our foes, embrace religious faith with a firmer grasp than ever. We are riding safe at anchor, while we see every other sect still tossing on the waves.

For ourselves, we think we see that one great benefit, which is to spring from the freedom of the religious discussion and action of this age, is the discovery of what is essential to Christianity, and its separation from what is merely adventitious. How much of cold and barren metaphysics, how much of dry system and technicality has been preached as the Gospel of Christ, till men's brains have reeled and their hearts frozen under their influence. And this because religion has been made to lean on other supports than its own spiritual power. Now that those supports are falling away, such preaching must run out. It has no vitality. It must die. Mere sentimentalism and natural religion, too, must be abandoned. Much less is life to be found in the earthly mould of Ultra-Universalism, in which almost every quickening ray of heaven seems to be extinguished. What then will be preached? The pure simple doctrine of Jesus, or nothing. Christianity must stand, if it stand at all, on its *Moral Power.* This after all is its great evidence. This is its standing miracle, as much so as the glory which rested upon the tabernacle in the desert. The moral power of the Gospel we consider at this day to be truly supernatural. Look at it. Here is the Christian ministry, a body of weak and fallible men, compassed like their brethren with ignorance and infirmity. And yet by their weekly ministrations they exert an amount of moral influence beyond all estimate. This influence differs in *kind* as well as degree from every other which mankind has ever witnessed or felt. A spiritual regeneration is effected, a character is formed of purity and elevation by it, which no other discipline that man has ever known, could impart. Whence then this moral power? Take away their Bibles and you will see. Send them into their pulpits with any other book, with the wisdom and truth and eloquence of all other books concentrated, and they become utterly impotent. The foul spirits which they before cast out, would get the mastery of them at once, and make

them feel that there is but one name which they obey, the name of Jesus of Nazareth. This moral power, as we before said, we esteem to be truly supernatural, and the great standing miracle and evidence of Christianity. And this power, as it distinguishes the religion of Jesus from all false religions, so will it distinguish the true Gospel from the inventions of man. The experiment is making with every form of doctrine. The false will be abandoned because they are useless. The true only can build up the kingdom of the Redeemer. Men are destined, we believe, to arrive at religious truth through their moral nature. Naked metaphysics we fear have done little, either in settling, or in recommending truth. "He that will do his will, shall know of the doctrine." So it is on the great scale. Men learn little as they ought, till "they receive the Gospel as a little child." Then it is that the mounds and walls of sects and parties begin to disappear, and the soul embraces with joy whatever of truth and goodness it perceives scattered among the different tribes of men. Such we hope and believe will be the order of things, when the present chaos of the religious elements assumes the form of a new creation. In the mean time the great warfare which is ever waging between "the flesh and the spirit," will still be going on. While the freedom of the will remains, "though one should rise from the dead," men will still continue to range themselves on the one side and the other, as the race move on to assume other stations in other spheres of being, some in "the resurrection of life," and some in "shame and everlasting contempt."

ART. II. — *An Argument to prove the Truth of the Christian Revelation*, by the EARL OF ROSSE. London. 1834. 8vo. pp. 443.

A WORK like this on the Evidences of Christianity by a nobleman, though not without honored precedents, must still be numbered with the rarest productions of the press. Lord Chancellor King's "Enquiry into the Constitution and Worship of the Primitive Church" and his "History of the Apostles' Creed"; Lord Barrington's "*Miscellanea Sacra*," with other considerable productions by the same learned

writer; * and Lord Lyttelton's well known popular work on the "Conversion of St. Paul," are among the few theological productions, that may claim nobility for their authorship. Of the writer of the book before us we know nothing but that his title designates him as an Irish nobleman, and the dedication of his work to the memory of a lamented son shows his family name to be Parsons. Whatever may be the merits of the author, recent or ancient as may be the honors of his house,† we see from this dedication that he has at least the heart of a father; and we find ourselves favorably disposed to the book by the touching mention of the domestic sorrow, that called it forth.

"To the memory of my late dear Son
The honorable John Clere Parsons
I dedicate the following Pages
in humble recollection of his unblemished virtues
and great acquirements
his filial piety, his gentle and polished manners
and his laudable ambition
to render himself
an ornament to his family and a benefactor
to his country.
He died on the 10th of August 1828
when it was fondly hoped
that he was just about to gather the fruits
of his honorable labors.

During the long period of deep affliction
for so great a loss
I studied the subject of this argument.
Rosse."

From the circumstances suggesting the work, it might perhaps be expected, that the author would have taken only

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* Lord Barrington is the author of a considerable work on "Natural and Revealed Religion," and of another on "The Dispensations of God to Man."

† The family of the Earl of Rosse, as appears from Brett's Peerage, is one of no inconsiderable antiquity and honor in Ireland. The author of this work, now in his seventy-fifth year, besides other publications of an earlier period, has distinguished himself among the political writers of the day, and still holds at his advanced age an honorable post in the government of Ireland.

the most practical views of his subject; or have been disposed to exhibit for others, as he needed for himself, the grounds of those hopes of immortality, which are the Christian's solace in adversity. But whatever of consolation he may have derived from these, — and they are the peculiar treasure of the bereaved and sorrowful, — he has wisely sought the relief that never fails from continued intellectual employment, and has produced a work of no ordinary scheme and enterprise.

To establish the truth of the Christian religion, he goes back to the very beginning of things. He first refutes the Aristotelian hypothesis of the eternity of the world. The truth of the Mosaic account of the creation, of the formation of the sun and the other heavenly bodies, he establishes from its accordance with the modern discoveries of science, those especially of La Place, Cuvier, Humboldt, and the latest philosophers. The date of the creation he considers as established by geological and astronomical facts, some of which have been recently ascertained; and as they could not have been known in the time of Moses, he considers their agreement with the Mosaic account as an evidence that the Jewish Lawgiver must have derived them from revelation.

The miraculous history of the Jewish people, as selected of God to preserve the knowledge of his name and the purity of his worship, is the subject of several introductory chapters. Neither our limits nor inclination allow us to refer to them, except as they are parts of a comprehensive plan, and as auxiliary to the direct testimony the author afterwards adduces in support of the Christian dispensation. And of the various evidence, by which this is sustained, his remarks are chiefly confined to that of miracles and of prophecy. These two subjects, including under the former the resurrection of Jesus as the "great miracle," without which preaching were vain, and faith also vain, occupy the larger half of this volume.

The history of the miracles, somewhat more than twenty of which are considered, is judiciously given. The objections, that have been urged against a part of them, are candidly met; the incidental circumstances showing their reality, or enhancing the direct testimony, are skilfully exhibited; and on the whole, whether as a narrative of extraordinary events, or illustrative of the character of Christ, or establishing

the claims of his religion to the faith of mankind, — this part of his Lordship's work will be read, we are persuaded, with edification and pleasure.

The following are his reflections on the miracle of restoring to sight the blind man of Bethsaida, who upon our Lord's first putting his hands upon him, said, "I see men as trees walking." In most other instances of the gospel miracles, their publicity and investigation on the spot by disinterested or jealous witnesses are proofs of their reality. In this, the privacy of the transaction, and the obscurity of the individual who was the subject of it, are justly adduced as evidence that there was no temptation to imposture from vanity or any more selfish consideration.

"No miracle, perhaps, could be more clear than this from the suspicion of imposture. For what was to be accomplished by it, that would compensate for the difficulties and risk of a fabrication? It was not performed in public, in the presence of a multitude, but on the contrary, from the account we have of it, we have no reason for supposing, that any one was present at it but the disciples. Therefore, there was nothing ostentatious in it; nothing to be obtained in the way of character and reputation. Jesus carefully avoided all display upon the occasion. He led the man out of the town in order to do it privately, and forbad him to enter the town, or to tell any person in the town. It cannot therefore, be supposed, that any one, in the character in which Jesus appeared, would. for the purpose of pretending to work such a private miracle, venture to engage in a confederacy with a man who was to counterfeit blindness. For it is obvious, that it is only by a person counterfeiting blindness, and then pretending to be cured, that a fictitious miracle of this kind would be attempted. Observe then the risk, that would be run. The person, personating blindness, might whenever he thought fit, discover the imposture, and thus bring Jesus into derision and contempt with his own followers. This would be no small risk. A wise man would scarcely incur it for the chance of any advantage so perilous, even if he were unprincipled enough to work by such means. But that any one should do so, only for a private exhibition, which could add nothing to public fame, is altogether incredible.

"Besides, what means had Jesus to compensate such a coadjutor? How was he to pay him? He had no money; he had no patronage. He had nothing that wealth and power could bestow; no, not even in the lowest degree. Is it then

credible, that a man should personate such an irksome and dismal defect for no advantage whatsoever? And that he should act the falsifier and impostor, and pretend to be cured, without a prospect of obtaining the slightest remuneration or reward thereby? Whether, therefore, the improbability be considered, of Jesus running the risk of the man betraying him; or whether the improbability of the man's acting such a part be considered, when he had no chance of recompense, it appears alike incredible, that this was a fabricated case of blindness. And when, in addition to all this, it is considered how difficult, if Jesus had been an impostor, it would have been for him, without the knowledge of his disciples to form such a plot, they being constantly with him; how difficult again it would have been for him, even if he had so formed it, to have deceived them by pretending to cure a man who only counterfeited blindness, when they had ample time and opportunity for observing whether the disease was real or assumed; and, finally, when it is considered how absurd it would have been that all this should have been thus planned, merely for the purpose of exhibiting it in private to these disciples, and of imposing on them, — nothing can well be conceived more improbable, than that this was a case of imposture. And if it was not, it must be admitted to have been a real miracle, performed by a more than human power, and that consequently his mission was divine." — pp. 266 – 269.

The evidence from Prophecy is another of the prominent topics of this work, and is discussed, though less fully, with adequate learning and judgment. Of the prophetic writings in general, the noble author remarks, that they present us with the most exalted ideas of the Deity, the justest notions of piety and virtue, and the most awful denunciations against wickedness in every form, public or private. "But it is," he adds, "their peculiar use and value to us, that in them are foretold the most remarkable circumstances of the birth, life, ministry, miracles, doctrines, sufferings, and death of Jesus of Nazareth; and that, too, in so minute and exact a manner, that it might almost be thought, that they were describing those things after they had happened, if it were not known, that these prophecies were written many hundred years before his birth, and were all that time in possession of the Jews, who were the mortal enemies of Christianity, and who, therefore, would not have forged, or suffered to be forged, or altered any passage in them to adapt it to the founder of that religion, to which they were so hostile."

To this general statement of the value and genuineness of the testimony from Prophecy, there lies, as we apprehend, no availing objection. To some minds, this evidence from Prophecy is of the most convincing nature. Implying, as the term denotes, the prediction of future events, it includes with it, of necessity, the inspiration of God, since, as "no one can work miracles," so none can foretell future events "except God be with him." And when it can be shown, that the prediction points to the event, and the event corresponds with the prediction, we know of nothing in the whole range of scripture evidence more conclusive or satisfactory. As has been well remarked concerning it, "it is a species of evidence, which no previous conjecture nor accidental coincidence," nor, we may add, any fanciful theories of accommodation, "are sufficient to counteract or invalidate."

Yet from the nature of the subject, — prediction and not history, — and not seldom too from the manner in which it has been treated, it is undeniably attended with difficulties. In the application, moreover, or interpretation of particular prophecies, there might be expected, as is found, a wide diversity of opinion. That with a blind zeal for finding Christ in every thing, in the ark, and in the tabernacle, in the sacrifices of the temple, and in every word that proceeded from the priests, — some have applied to him personally, or to his religion or kingdom, passages which bear no such application, — which were either not uttered as predictions at all, or had their fulfilment in events near at hand; that others, led away by that delusive and mischievous theory of a double sense of prophecy, a primary and a secondary, have introduced mysticism and perplexity, — is not less true. We willingly, and of choice, reject from this testimony what is doubtful or cannot be proved to belong to it. Just interpretation demands here, as in all other parts of Scripture, a strict adherence to the "unity of sense;"* that is, when it is ascertained, that

* "In all other authors besides the Scriptures," says Dr. Benson, in his admirable "Essay on the Unity of Sense," "before we sit down to read and study them, we expect to find in them one, single, determinate sense and meaning of the words; from which we may be satisfied, that we have attained to their meaning and understand what they intended to say."

a text or passage means one thing, it cannot also mean another. If a prediction refer to one person or event, it cannot at the same time include another person or event; nor may we suppose, that while it has a primary reference to a prior individual or history, it looks forward also to another subsequent or remote. "For if the Scriptures are not to be interpreted, like the best ancient authors, in their one true and genuine meaning, common readers," says the writer already cited, "will be led to doubt, whether or no the Scriptures have any certain meaning at all. They will be for ever at a loss what to believe and what to practise; on what to ground their comfort here, and their hope of everlasting happiness hereafter." On this obvious, and only safe rule of interpretation, many passages in the Psalms and in the Prophets, which ignorance, inadvertence, or a misguided zeal would refer to Christ, should be referred, where they belong, to David, or to David's son, to the kings or kingdoms of Israel or of Judah, to the condition, prosperous or adverse, to the sins and impending calamities of the neighbouring idolatrous nations. For the objects of the Old testament predictions were almost as various as the predictions themselves. Some of them announced events just ready to be accomplished, and were designed for the immediate instruction of those to whom they were addressed. Others looked forward to more distant periods. Of this class were the denunciations, so frequent in the prophetic books, of the fate of various kingdoms, of Egypt, and of Babylon, of Nineveh and Tyre. These were "the burdens," with which the souls of the Prophets were oppressed; the heavy doom, which they were commanded to utter. Yet who will contend that these had any relation to Christ or his religion? Surely none, except that they are found in the same Scriptures, which do in truth speak of him. We do not want for the evidence of our faith this cumbrous help.

There is another class of predictions, which with far better reason have been applied to Jesus Christ or to his religion; and which, even by intelligent critics, have been understood as susceptible of a double sense. Of such are the second and the sixteenth Psalms. "But if," as says Benson, whose authority on this point is inferior to none, "they can be shown throughout to agree to David, then let them be interpreted exclusively of him." So, also, if in the seventy-second

Psalm the prophet intended the son of David, King Solomon, then he intended him alone; and the whole Psalm is to be interpreted of the peace and prosperity of Solomon's reign; and we only diminish the worth and value of the Christian evidence by pretending that at the same time he looked forward to the kingdom of Christ.

But notwithstanding this, and yet more that sound interpretation would reject, the Christian evidence from predictions, fulfilled and fulfilling, is abundant and complete. In addition to all the miraculous attestation, by which it was established, we have also, in the language of the Apostle, the sure word of prophecy, unto which we do well if we take heed. And when Isaiah at a distance of more than seven hundred years, declares, "There shall spring forth a shoot from the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots; and the spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him; the spirit of wisdom and of understanding; the spirit of the knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah;" * when, announcing, as we interpret it, the place of Messiah's birth, the Prophet Micah declares, ch. v. 2, "But thou, Bethlehem, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come a governor, who shall rule my people Israel, whose goings forth have been of old;" — when, designating the place of his parents' abode, it is said, (Isaiah ix, 2,) "In the land of Zebulon and of Nepthali, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan in Galilee, the people, that sat in darkness saw a great light, and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined:" when, yet again, the same prophet declares, "Unto us a son is born, unto us a child is given," (Isaiah ix. 6,) and afterwards describing in his own person the blessed influences of his mission, "The spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me; for Jehovah hath anointed me: He hath sent me to publish good tidings to the distressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim the year of mercy from Jehovah;" † and this prediction, too, applied by our Lord to himself, when rising in the synagogue, and reading the passage, he said, "This day is the Scripture fulfilled in your ears;" when Jeremiah predicts, (ch. xxiii, 5, 6,) "Behold the days come, saith Jeho-

* Isaiah xi. 1, 2, *et seq.* See Noyes's Translation.
† Isaiah lxi. 1, 2, in the same Translation.

vah, that I will raise up unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall execute judgment, and this is his name, whereby he shall be called, THE LORD, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS;" when Daniel saw in prophetic vision one like the son of man, coming in the clouds of heaven, to whom was given dominion and glory, a dominion that should not pass away, and a kingdom, that should not be destroyed; when, passing from the solemnity and magnificence of a general description, he specifies the very time "determined upon the people and upon the city to finish the transgression and seal up the prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy;" nay, the exact period, at the end of which, Messiah should be cut off, though not for himself, (Dan. vii. 13, and ix. 24 – 26;) and finally, when at the close of all, Malachi predicts, (ch. iii. 1 – 3,) "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, in whom ye delight:" — for ourselves, we read in these the same sure word of prophecy of which the Apostle speaks; we see not merely a vague and indefinite anticipation, — a looking forward to one knows not what, — nor yet terms of general import, to be applied only in accommodation, or for rhetorical ornament, as we quote from orators and poets, — but clear, distinct predictions of the kingdom and coming of Jesus Christ.

Of these, were it necessary, we might select for more particular illustration that memorable prediction, which commences with the close of the fifty-second and is continued through the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, in which the prophet describes the humiliaton, sufferings, and reward of the Messiah. The language of this prediction is scarcely less remarkable than the character and events it foretells. In the number, minuteness, and peculiarity of the circumstances it details, it would seem to be rather a record of what had been, than a prophecy of what was to come. "Here," says Paley, who in his admirable view of the "Evidences of Christianity" selects this from the whole range of ancient prophecies, as the clearest and strongest of them all, — "here is no double sense, no figurative language, but what is sufficiently intelligible to every reader of every country. And what adds to the force of the quotation is, that it is taken from a writing, *declaredly prophetic*, professing to describe such future transactions and changes in the world, as were connected with the fate and interests of the Jewish nation."

The ancient Jews, as Chandler has fully shown, interpreted it of the Messiah. And the modern Jews, too well aware of the weight of the argument, have exhausted all their ingenuity to evade the application of a prediction, the authenticity of which they could by no methods disprove. They have referred it to the distressed condition of their own nation; to the persecutions and sufferings of their own prophet Jeremiah; to one of their kings, and even, as their last resort, to one or more of their Rabbis. That it points to an individual and not to a nation, the whole scope and spirit of the prediction incontrovertibly proves, and no individual has ever appeared, to whose life, and condition, and character ingenuity itself could find a resemblance, but Jesus Christ. To him it perfectly accords. In him, with astonishing exactness, was it fulfilled. His humble yet miraculous birth, his spotless life, his meek patience, his bitter sufferings, "wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities;" the humiliation of his death, "his grave appointed with the wicked, yet with the rich man his tomb;"* and finally the glory of his reward, "because he poured out his soul unto death; because he bore the sin of many and made intercession for transgressors," — reasons applicable in no sense to any mortal beside, — all these are distinctly described. Had this prediction stood alone, it had been enough to show the connexion between the Jewish and the Christian dispensation; to establish the latter on the evidence of prophecy in the former. For this, its obvious interpretation, we have in addition the express authority of Philip, who, in answering to the enquiries of the Ethiopian convert, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this?" "began at this same scripture and preached unto him Jesus."†

But there are other predictions, which it were easy to adduce, in which with less distinctness, indeed, but in terms not to be mistaken, the names and offices of Messiah are enumerated, the nature and influences of his religion are described, and the triumphs of his faith are anticipated. Which shall we most admire, — the bold and glowing strains in which the Prophets foretold, or the calm historic

* Isaiah liii. 7 – 9. Noyes's Translation.
† Acts viii. 30 – 35.

simplicity with which the Evangelists describe, Jesus Christ? The language of their predictions is the consecrated language of Christian piety and faith. Like that of the songs of Zion and the hymns of early childhood, it is identified with the purest and highest feelings of devotion. Nor would we lightly disturb the association. In the minds of unlearned but sincere disciples, there may be, and doubtless are, mingled with their views of these predictions, some fancies, which a severe criticism or careful interpretation would reject. But much as we reverence good learning, we should be slow to remove the error at the hazard of the truth; and should hardly congratulate ourselves upon our success, if, in taking away the first, we had not with the great Reformer, established the second.

But another, and to our view, the most material argument upon this whole subject, is drawn from the application made of many of these predictions by our Lord to himself; and to the same person in repeated instances by his Evangelists, the historians of his life, and by his Apostles, the first preachers of his faith. This application is in some instances of the most direct and explicit kind; and furnishes an evidence to us at least abundant and convincing.

Many passages, we well know, are quoted from the Old Testament into the New, in simple accommodation; as is usual with one writer to quote from another for illustration or rhetorical ornament. No careful reader of the Gospels will fail to perceive, that many texts borrowed in this manner from the prophetical and other books, have a different meaning from that for which they are here employed: and that the terms "then was fulfilled" — or, "this was spoken that it might be fulfilled," are used by our Lord and his Evangelists not to intimate the connexion of a prediction with its completion, but simply as forms of quotation. This has been so satisfactorily shown by various writers, * and will be

* Any one, who may desire satisfaction upon this point, needs only consult Sykes's chapter, "The Meaning of the Phrase *That it might be fulfilled*," in his volume on Prophecy; Benson in the Essay already quoted; Everett's "Defence of Christianity," Chapter vi. And we have much pleasure in referring to an ingenious and highly satisfactory view of this subject in a dissertation, by Mr. W. G. Eliot, lately of the Theological School, Cambridge, and printed in the last number of "The Scriptural Interpreter."

so readily admitted by all who have given any attention to the subject, that it is scarcely necessary to say, it is not to passages of this class that we refer.

But our Lord repeatedly refers the Jews to their own books for evidence concerning himself; and when, meaning of necessity the Old Testament, he says, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they, which testify of me;" when, rebuking their unbelief, he adds, "If ye had believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me;" yet again, when entering into the synagogue, he opened the book of the prophet Esaias, and read the passage already quoted announcing the object of his mission, and declared concerning it, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears;" when to the woman of Samaria, expressing her expectation of the coming of the Messiah as promised by the Prophets, he says, "I that speak unto thee am he;" and when, after he had risen from the dead, and met his distrusting disciples, he rebukes their slowness of heart to believe what the Prophets had spoken, and beginning with Moses, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, — in these and in other passages, we find a clear, distinct application of the ancient prophecies by his own lips to himself. It is the Master's own interpretation of the prophecies, — and who will pretend that he did not understand them. Therefore we say, as did Philip to Nathanael, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

And if from the Master we turn to his Apostles and first preachers, after they were instructed in the faith they were commissioned to teach, we find such passages as these. Peter, addressing the men of Israel, amidst their surprise at the miraculous cure of the lame man, says, "The God of Abraham hath glorified his son Jesus." — "For those things, which God before hath showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." — "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and them that follow after, have foretold of these days." *

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* It is in this connexion the reader will perceive that the Apostle adduces that remarkable prediction, taken from Deuteronomy, "For

The same Apostle, announcing the gracious purposes of God for the salvation of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews, declares, that "to him," that is, to Jesus of Nazareth, "give all the prophets witness"; and Paul, in writing to the Romans, designates himself as called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, which "*he promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures.*"

Now though it should be conceded, that of these and of other predictions we may not ascertain the precise meaning, nor even, of any one of them, may be able to assert to what specifically the prophet points, still their use and value as predictions remain; and the object, moreover, for which they were uttered is accomplished. They were sufficiently clear to produce that expectation, which was entertained alike by the Jewish and the Gentile world; which not only led a few devout men to wait for redemption in Jerusalem, but was the hope and consolation of all Israel, to which, said Paul, "the twelve tribes hoped to come." The woman of Samaria spoke in the name of her whole people, when she said, "We know that Messiah cometh." And what but the report of these predictions could have awakened the fears of Herod, or have sent the wise men to inquire "where the Christ should be born"?

Let it be admitted, also, that the truth of the Christian revelation does not *depend* upon the literal fulfilment of any prophecies of the Old Testament by Jesus, as a person. Christianity, as has been well said,* is supported "by the intrinsic value of its doctrines and precepts, and their adaptation to the wants and weaknesses of man; by the facts recorded in the gospel history; by the life, death, and resur-

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Moses truly said unto the Fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me. Him shall ye hear in all things." Whether this prediction, as would certainly appear from this citation by the Apostle and again by Stephen, Acts vii. 37, pointed personally and exclusively to Jesus Christ, or, as some critics of note have supposed, it should be interpreted of the long succession of Prophets, beginning at the time of Moses, it still includes the Messiah, who was one, and the most glorious of that succession.

See a candid and impartial view of this matter in the late Rev. Samuel Cary's "Review of a book entitled 'The Grounds of Christianity.'" Boston. 1813.

*See Christian Examiner for July, 1834, art. "Hengstenberg's Christology."

rection of our Saviour," and especially, we add, by *its own independent testimony from prophecy.* Christ himself was a prophet, — the greatest of all the prophets; and he uttered many predictions, which the world has seen fulfilled. He foretold his rejection by his own countrymen, their unbelief and ingratitude, the denial of Peter, the treachery of Judas, the desertion of all his disciples. He foretold his own death, his resurrection, and future glory; the sufferings which his disciples would endure as the first preachers of his faith; the opposition it would encounter, and yet its spread and triumph in the world. He foretold events more distant than these, — the rejection of his religion by the Jews, the consequent forfeiture of their national privileges, the destruction of their city and temple, and their final dispersion throughout the world. Of the exact fulfilment of all these predictions history affords abundant testimony, and there remain to this day sensible monuments.

The gospel, then, is sustained by the evidence of prophecy, independently of its connexion with the Jewish religion. Nay, take away from Christianity all the testimony it derives either from its own or the ancient Jewish predictions, and though indeed you deprive it of an evidence, which to some minds is irresistible, enough remains, and more than enough, in its internal and historical evidence, in the sublime character of its author, in its beautiful and glorious revelations of the immortal life, to command the faith and to sustain the hopes of all mankind.*

At the same time, the united predictions of the Old and New Testament constitute in our view a most interesting and important part of the evidences of our religion. They

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* We repeat here, as the writer may have been misapprehended, the statement of this part of our subject, given in the Examiner for July 1834, in the notice of "Hengstenberg's Christology," already referred to.

"That Jesus was the Messiah in the sense in which he claimed to be so, we are far from questioning. But whether he can be shown to be the subject of supernatural prophecy or not, he was anointed by God with the holy spirit, and with power to sustain the office of Instructer and Reformer of the world; he was sanctified and sent into the world to accomplish purposes of God, and to introduce a dispensation, for which the whole Jewish economy had been a preparation, and by which the best hopes and most ardent desires of prophets and righteous men would be more than answered." — p. 327.

are among the various proofs, that "God hath glorified his son Jesus." We number it with the countless tokens of the manifold wisdom of God, that as in the dispensation of the truth itself, so in the evidences by which it is attended, it is graciously adapted to the diversities of men's minds, to their different habits of thought, or degrees of improvement. Thus, the kind of evidence that fails to convince one mind, may be decisive with another; and he, who may refuse his assent, or be slow to believe the word of prophecy, may yield a ready faith to the testimony of miracles. So also, in the nature of the truth, there is mingled doctrine with precept, warnings with invitations; there are promises, that the humblest may hope, and threatenings that the presumptuous may fear.

In the remarks we have offered, we have taken only a very cursory view of an important subject. Our readers will perceive, that we have not even glanced at many considerations, which a more extended survey should embrace. The "history of Prophecy" especially, might open a wide and fruitful field; which notwithstanding the learned labors of Grotius, Whiston, Le Clerc, Newton, and Sherlock, in his admirable treatise on "The Use and Intent of Prophecy," might be successfully improved. It is of such an history Lord Bacon says,* that "comparing every scripture prophecy with the event, it would serve for the better confirmation of the faith, and the better information of the church, with regard to the interpretation of prophecies not yet fulfilled. This is a work which I find deficient. But," adds he, "it should either be undertaken with wisdom, sobriety, and reverence, or not at all."

ART. III. — *A Sermon preached before the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, on their CXCVIth Anniversary, June 2d*, 1834. By the Rev. F. H. HEDGE. Boston. J. H. Eastburn. 1834. 8vo. pp. 30.

THE man, who is called upon to officiate upon any of our anniversary celebrations, whether religious or secular, is

* Bacon's Works, Vol. VI. "De Augmentis Scientiarum."

rather to be condoled with, than congratulated. The mere fact, that the orator is one in a series of men, each of whom has performed the same duty with more or less of ability, imposes a clog and restraint upon the mind, and fills a sensitive person with nervous apprehensions of the disadvantageous comparisons that may be drawn by those whose memories are painfully retentive. Every year, too, increases the intrinsic difficulty, since every year yields its pamphlet, in which the same subject is treated, and less room is left for him who comes after. Notwithstanding the boundless variety of the human mind, it is natural that persons of average capacity should be led into similar trains of thought by a consideration of the same themes under circumstances very nearly similar, and none, but a mind of decided originality, can escape falling into the worn and familiar track of discussion.

These inferences, we believe, are borne out by facts. Of the innumerable anniversary discourses which have been pronounced in New England, how few comparatively have marked superiority enough to rescue them from the teeth of Time, who, omnivorous as he is, takes a peculiar pleasure in consuming every thing of the pamphlet race. Most of these productions are not even fair specimens of the powers of their several authors. They are generally characterized by a tameness of thought and a well-bred propriety in expression, a formal annunciation of commonplace truths, a proper sprinkling of the current phrases of the day, and an indulgence in self-complacent reminiscences and glowing anticipations. We find in them the same thoughts in new garbs, the old sentiments paraphrased and often diluted, and recognise distinctly a strong family likeness. To these, as to all general remarks, there are, of course, exceptions, though not always favorable ones. There are but few symmetrical and well-balanced minds; and many men, in their desire to avoid being commonplace and formal, fall into startling extravagance, and show an indecorous disrespect for public opinion, common sense, and common taste. Anxious to escape the regular elliptical orbit, they rush into the eccentric vagaries of a comet, and, in their search after originality, forsake that dignity and propriety which are always becoming, and, to the pulpit, nothing less than essential. After making all these deductions, there remains still a small

minority of productions rich in every thing requisite to secure a permanent reputation, in vigorous and striking thoughts, eloquent expressions, purity of style, and manly independence of sentiment.

Among this minority we rank without hesitation the Artillery Election Sermon of Mr. Hedge. It is not one of those sermons which men read from a sense of duty. It has the stamp of originality on every page, and we can hardly turn over the leaves without feeling that we are communing with a mind which thinks for itself, and thinks wisely and well. His views are large, liberal, and comprehensive. He has the philosophic glance which sees objects in their just proportions, and which groups heterogeneous masses into a well-arranged whole. His sermon has the somewhat rare merits of unity and completeness. He does not seem to have begun it without knowing where or how it should end, and to have cast himself upon a current of thought without heeding where it might carry him, but to have drawn the plan of his work before he began to build. The several departments of the discourse succeed each other in a natural and harmonious order, and give to the whole the beauty of symmetry and proportion.

The style of this discourse, no less than its historical allusions, shows the trained and accomplished scholar. It is rich, vigorous, and flexible, — smooth without being insipid, and polished without being elaborate. It has, what we frequently miss in these days of rapid and careless composition, purity and precision. We look in vain for a slovenly sentence, or a slip-shod expression. Mr. Hedge does not treat his thoughts with so little respect as to send them into the world with a scanty or unbecoming garb. The following introductory paragraphs explain the objects and purposes of the discourse with much simplicity and beauty.

"The occasion which has now brought us together, has claims upon all who feel an interest in the early history of this Commonwealth. The anniversary, which we celebrate this day, is among the oldest that our annals record; it carries us back through two centuries of revolution and improvement to the first planting of New England, — that day of earnest expectation, when a new manifestation of the sons of God was believed to be at hand.

"Your institution, gentlemen of the Ancient and Honorable

Artillery Company, connects you with that period, which may, emphatically, be called the heroic age of our country; an age, when manhood and individual worth possessed an influence, which they can command only in the infancy of nations. Your charter has come to you from brave and godly men, who, in an age of depravity and misrule, were called to exhibit, in this far corner of the earth, the novel spectacle of a nation founded in truth and righteousness: — men, who, though they dreamed not of glory, are become exceeding glorious in our eyes, — who, though they toiled not for fame, have earned the brightest that earth affords.

"There are periods in the progress of society, when new prospects of social happiness unfold themselves to the philanthropist. The great hope of humanity, the hope of infinite progress, is never entirely extinct: now and then it breaks forth through some long eclipse of history, and becomes a guiding-star and a bright augury to coming centuries. It may be the discovery of some new principle in the natural or moral world, that awakens this hope; or it may be kindled by the ministry of some pious reformer, or by a whole generation of reformers, as at the founding of these colonies: whatever the cause, the effects are blessed; a new interest is felt in the destination of man, and a prophecy of better days is abroad in the earth. In the contemplation of such periods, the passage of Scripture, which I have selected for this occasion, will not be thought misplaced. 'For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God:' in other words, the world is eagerly awaiting that better state of things which the reformers sent by God are about to effect. At the time when these words were written, the most abandoned of tyrants was seated upon the throne of the world.* It was a period of deep corruption, of universal woe, — a season of despair to most men, and of fiery trial to the few in whom a better faith precluded despair. In the strong language of the Apostle whom I have quoted, 'the whole creation groaned and travailed together' in helpless anguish. In the midst of this darkness, there sprung up a race of men, such as the world had never seen before, — men, born of the spirit, and baptized with fire, — a band of reformers, who, in the midst of corruption, maintained a blameless conversation; in the midst of superstition, worshipped the true God; in the midst of a selfish and luxurious generation, devoted themselves to hardship and death. These were the sons of God sent to reprove and re-

"* The Epistle to the Romans was written while Nero was emperor."

deem the world; and soon the world was filled with the glory of their manifestation, and with the fruits of their ministry. Thus it hath ever happened, that the most corrupt ages of the world have witnessed the loftiest manifestations of faith and devotion; whenever the frame of society is most diseased, the remedy is near." — pp. 3 – 5.

Mr. Hedge then passes to the consideration of another epoch when the "earnest expectation of the creature" was again awakened, the period when the Fathers of New England entered on their mission. There was much in the character of these men, and in the heroic nature of their enterprise, to justify these expectations, and the growth of their settlements did not disappoint the friends of humanity in the old world. Their peaceful and uninterrupted progress during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is happily and forcibly contrasted with the wars, disorders, and struggles which prevailed in the old world, during the same period. The present condition of our country is such as to satisfy all reasonable expectations, and the moral influence, which it has exerted and continues to exert upon the world at large, is great and valuable. Mr. Hedge justly remarks that "all the great moral movements of the day, the abolition of slavery, the instruction of the poor, the suppression of vice, the reformation of prison discipline, and the first systematic efforts to promote universal peace, have either originated or received their strongest impulse here; and the fact augurs well for the future prospects of our country."

These future prospects Mr. Hedge proceeds to consider in a strain of sober good sense, without extravagant confidence or equally extravagant despondency. He regards the efforts for the improvement of the family of man as the leading characteristics of the times. The means generally used to effect this consist in voluntary associations, whose utility and dangers Mr. Hedge discusses at considerable length. We will not do injustice to his eloquent and discriminating remarks by condensing them. They deserve the serious consideration of every patriot and philanthropist. The vast number and variety of our benevolent, literary, and religious associations, are beginning to be felt as an evil, and those who have been most efficient in promoting them may be ready to acknowledge the truth of the saying quoted by Lord Bacon, "Stay a little, that we may make an end the

sooner." The following extract shows the spirit and character of this portion of the discourse.

"A still further objection to the system of combination is, that it destroys individuality of character, endangers freedom and independence of thought, and thereby retards the progress of truth. Truth is not elicited by popular excitement, nor discovered in public discussions. It is to be found only in self-communion, in the private study of ourselves and of God. And it is not to be found there, unless the mind acts with perfect freedom and originality, unbiassed by party associations, unprejudiced by public opinion. This freedom is rarely to be met with in those who have leagued themselves with numerous associations. The habit of acting only in conjunction with large bodies tends to enfeeble and enslave the mind. It disqualifies us for independent thought and action; it disposes us to receive the opinions and principles of the body to which we belong, as our own opinions and principles; it induces us to coöperate with that body in measures, which our unbiassed judgment would not approve. There is a tacit pledge, an unconscious obligation to do so, which few have self-knowledge enough to perceive, or firmness enough to resist. Right views and a sound morality are attainable only by a nature, which knows itself, and which acts from principles itself has established, without regard to public opinion or public example. Such natures are as little prone to follow blindly in the steps of the multitude when they happen to be treading a right path, as when they are moving in a wrong direction: they seek their motives of action within themselves; they seek the right because it is right, never asking and never caring whether it is practised by others or not. It is only by such principles that a manly character, or indeed any character, can be formed. Habits of action into which we are led by the influence of example, however good, are not *moral*, — can never constitute a character. He who acts on principles derived from others, who sacrifices his individuality to the opinions and the will of a party, *has no character;* he is merely a reflection of the character of some leading mind." — pp. 13, 14.

Mr. Hedge next proceeds to the objects contemplated in the philanthropic movements of the day, and confines himself to the consideration of an appropriate and important one, — the abolition of war. He dwells upon the difficulty of the project of a universal peace, and the following paragraph is as true in sentiment, as it is brilliant in expression.

"In order to appreciate fully the difficulty of effecting a general and permanent peace, in order to understand what it is that we propose to accomplish, we must consider well, how strong and how universal the passion for war has been in all ages of the world. This passion is one of the most remarkable phenomena in human nature. So prevalent, so unremitting has it been, that an English philosopher of some repute was led to declare war to be the natural state of man. And truly, it would seem as if there were some foundation for this belief; at least it is not difficult to conceive how a philosopher, *reasoning from facts and not from principles*, should adopt such an opinion. It cannot be denied that war has ever been the most common employment and condition of nations. Seasons of peace are but brief interludes in the solemn tragedy of the world. As far back as we can trace the history of man we find him struggling with his fellow-man. The first use which he made of his godlike faculties was to forge implements of destruction. The sword was an earlier invention than the ploughshare, the bow and the spear have ever preceded the scythe and the spade; and the clods of the earth were removed to make room for the first fruits of slaughter ere ever a furrow was opened to receive the seed of the husbandman. But little has come down to us of the mighty men of old but the record of their splendid homicides. We see them at the head of immense armies, sweeping the earth like the breath of the pestilence, withering every green hope, and devouring the ungathered harvests. They toiled for glory, and glory was theirs, — the glory of the lightning, which shatters where it shines. The heroes of antiquity, the kings of Egypt, of Assyria, of Persia, and of Macedon, — what do we know of them, but how many thousands they led forth to battle and how few hundreds returned with the boast of victory. Victory! — well did the Roman annalist describe it; 'A scene where profound and universal silence reigns, funeral mounds on every side; distant and rare the smoke of human habitations; no one to greet the eye of the wanderer.' It might be supposed that so rude a pastime would have been relished only in a rude age and by an ignorant people; but polished Athens and stately Rome partook of its pleasures with as keen a gust as the nations whom they pronounced barbarous. It might have been supposed that Christianity would have set bounds to the tide of blood; but the progress of Christian civilization has thus far only added new importance, new skill, and new efficacy to the art of war. It is no longer the rude thing it was in the hands of Xerxes or Hamilcar; it has been exalted to a graver beauty and adorned with a terrible grace; dignified with the honors

of a science, and enriched with the choicest results of modern invention. The advancement of society, so far from diminishing, has increased the frequency of wars. The last two centuries have abounded more in this cruel custom than any two previous centuries of the world's history. And even now, Christian Europe, bowed with the weight of years, grown grey in old campaigns, and scarred with thousand battles, still clutches the sword with her veteran and palsied hands as eagerly as she grasped it in the days of her youth. History has been censured for speaking only of conquerors and of battles; but in truth, history has had little else to record. The arts of peace have always hid themselves in obscurity; the progress of human improvement has been always a secret stream revealing itself only by the superior fertility of the regions through which it passed: while all that appears on the surface, all that is obvious to the historian, the great current of human affairs has been red with war from its source until now." — pp. 16 – 19.

Mr. Hedge supports his position by a reference to history, and gives a most animated and picturesque sketch of the famous war of the Spanish succession, presenting, in a few glowing and magic words, all the waste of treasure and blood it occasioned, as well as the paltry nature of the objects struggled for. He dwells with fervor and earnestness upon the incalculable evils of war, and upon the duty of good men to direct their efforts to abolish it. This can only be effected by the operation of great and good minds upon public opinion, and by giving more and more extent to the "subduing and pity-moving influence" of the Christian Religion. For the whole of this portion of his discourse, Mr. Hedge deserves the warm thanks of the friends of peace. The sermon concludes with the usual address to the Company, which is conceived and expressed with great felicity.

We are sensible that we are doing great injustice to Mr. Hedge by our brief and imperfect analysis. A popular discourse bears such treatment less well than almost any other class of composition; but our readers will perceive from the specimens which we have quoted, that our commendations are amply merited. We have no hesitation in saying that it is, in its kind, one of the finest productions of the day. We are glad to bear our testimony to its merits, and to recommend it to our readers, many of whom, probably, seeing that it is an Artillery Election Sermon, have looked no further than the cover.

The reviewer's office is but half done, if he does not find some fault. Having spoken in such high terms of the sentiments, thoughts, and style of this sermon, it will not be expected that we should qualify our praises by any general censure. We have no such intention. We have merely noticed one inadvertence. Mr. Hedge speaks of "Sir Joseph Addison." We are not aware that Addison was ever knighted. We could have wished that another expression had been substituted (p. 28,) for that of "the infant God."

[For the Christian Examiner.]

ART. IV. — *The Validity of Congregational Ordination.* A Discourse delivered before the University in Cambridge, at the Dudleian Lecture, May 14, 1834. By ALVAN LAMSON, Pastor of the First Church in Dedham, Massachusetts.*

THE Episcopal controversy is no longer, as formerly, an exciting theme. It may be said, in fact, to belong to history. No intelligent person, certainly no one who has not some interest to serve, now thinks of attributing any special sanctity either to the crown or the mitre. If Episcopacy is to be defended at the present day, it is not on the ground of divine right, — that is an obsolete fiction, — but of its utility.

It is my duty at this time to "maintain and prove" the validity of Congregational ordination, "as the same hath

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* Large portions of this Discourse, including the whole historical argument on the Episcopal question, were omitted in the delivery, on account of its length, and two or three passages as not partaking of that character of abstract discussion, which the author was desirous to preserve, and which courtesy seemed to require, in a discourse addressed to the members of a University devoted to no sect or party. These passages, relating chiefly to the application and practical bearing of some of the principles which it was the object of the performance to defend, or of the opposite, are now retained. It is hardly necessary to add, that for the sentiments contained in the discourse, the author alone is responsible. He speaks as the organ of no sect, or class of Christians.

I may add, what, however, the attentive reader will all along perceive, that in my observations on religious societies and churches, I speak of them solely in their *ecclesiastical* character. With their legal character I have nothing to do. That has been settled by the proper tribunals.

been practised in New England from the first." "Not that I would," says the founder of the Lecture, "any ways invalidate Episcopal ordination, as it is commonly called, and practised in the Church of England; but I do esteem the method of ordination as practised in Scotland, at Geneva, and among the dissenters in England, and in the churches in this country, to be very safe, scriptural, and valid."

I am not then required, and I certainly feel no disposition to impugn the validity of Episcopal ordination, but only to combat the exclusive pretensions of its friends. As long as they are satisfied with claiming only what belongs to all classes of Christians, the right of each to judge for itself in all matters pertaining to faith and discipline, we have no wish to interfere with their opinions or ceremonies. We would leave them, as we would the thousand other sects into which Christians are divided, to the peaceable enjoyment of their doctrines and mode of worship. But when they proceed to say to us, and to all who do not adopt their peculiar views of church polity, — You are without an authorized ministry; your teachers, not being lawfully called and ordained, are mere intruders into the holy office; and the ordinances administered by them are not administered according to the mind of Christ, and have no validity; — they assume too much. Renouncing the Pope, in the language of Milton, they "still hug the Popedom."

I am no more disposed to contend for the divine institution of Presbyterianism, or of Congregationalism, than of Episcopacy. I do not imagine that any one of them is of positive divine institution. Of all forms of ecclesiastical polity with which I am acquainted, however, that of Diocesan Episcopacy, as understood to imply that Bishops and Priests constitute distinct orders, has the least claim to be regarded as the primitive one.

It is true the term Bishop occurs in ancient Christian writings, and in those of Paul himself. But in what sense? Evidently in its original sense of overseer, inspector, one who has any care or charge. The primitive Bishops were persons selected from among the first converts made in any place where Christianity was preached, to superintend the affairs of the little fraternity of believers in that place, to preserve them in purity of faith, and generally to further the objects of the new religion. They are called, indiscrimi-

nately, Bishops and Presbyters, the latter designation having a Jewish, and the former a Greek original. Thus St. Paul, as we are informed, sent from Miletus to request the "Elders" of the Church or body of believers at Ephesus, to come to him, and when present addressed them as the "Bishops" of the Ephesian Church.* In his Epistles, too, passages occur in which the terms are evidently interchanged. In giving directions concerning the office of Bishop or of Presbyter, the connexion of his language and his general argument show that he intends one and the same office, and not two. He speaks of Bishops and Deacons, and of Elders and Deacons, as of two orders, but never of Bishops, Elders, and Deacons, as of three.

It is unnecessary to go more into detail. It is admitted by the best writers in favor of Episcopacy, and I believe by all recent critics of any note, that the terms Bishop and Presbyter are sometimes, at least, used synonymously by the writers of the Acts and Epistles; and, as no instance has yet been produced in which they are unequivocally employed by them to designate two orders of the Christian ministry, and as it is not now pretended by the most strenuous advocates of Episcopacy, that Christ himself instituted any form of ecclesiastical polity, the controversy, so far as it relates to the names and descriptions of office occurring in the Apostolical writings, may, I believe, be considered as settled. No real friend of Episcopacy, certainly, if he knows what he is about, will now think of appealing to the use of the terms Bishop and Presbyter in the New Testament, as proving a distinction of order.

In regard to the assertion that the Apostles in their own persons transmitted the Episcopal character, it is sufficient to say, that their writings contain no intimation of this sort; and, further, that the office of Apostles as ordained to be the witnesses of Christ after his resurrection, and by the aid of miracles to spread abroad a knowledge of his religion, was from its nature temporary. They were extraordinary teachers, deriving their commission immediately from Jesus, and having no particular charge, diocese, or see, but were sent out to preach Christ to all the world, and with them their name and office died.

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* Acts xx. 17, 28.

A similar remark may be made with respect to Timothy and Titus, through whom the attempt has been made to derive the succession of Bishops. They belonged not to the class of ordinary teachers, and consequently had, and could have, no successors.

I do not pretend to have given even an outline of the evidence from the New Testament against the exclusive claim of Episcopacy to the possession of an authorized ministry. I have stated two or three facts or grounds of argument merely. More is not needed. The subject has been often enough treated at sufficient length; and even did it admit of being thoroughly discussed within the limits of a single discourse, without the exclusion of other topics, about which I cannot be wholly silent, I should shrink from taxing your patience by a long-drawn argument on so dry a point.

But though no evidence of the distinction contended for be found in the Scriptures, do we not meet with vestiges of it in the writings of the ancient Christians? have we not proof that it existed before the last witnesses of the resurrection had sunk to their rest? This ground has been taken by the advocates of the Apostolic origin of Diocesan Episcopacy; but it is equally untenable, I conceive, with the former. The opponents of Episcopacy are able to show from the old writers, that, for fifty years after the last of the Apostles had passed from the earth, the terms Bishop and Elder were used interchangeably as designating one order, and continued to be so used occasionally for a long time afterwards.

The earliest writings of Christian antiquity which have come down to us, those contained in the New Testament excepted, are those of Justin Martyr, the pieces attributed to the Apostolic Fathers being of doubtful antiquity, and in their present form certainly not genuine. Justin was a learned convert from Paganism to Christianity, and flourished a little before the middle of the second century. He is separated from the time of the Apostles by a dark gulph. But cross the chasm, what do we find? How far has the ancient simplicity been preserved? Have the primitive and lowly Pastors, the unassuming Presbyter-bishops of the first days, passed away? What evidence do we discover in the writings of Justin, that there existed in his time a class of officers in the Church, superior in order to the Elders? Not the least. The name of Bishop, if I mistake not, does

not occur in any of his productions now extant. Yet occasions in sufficient abundance offered, of mentioning the order, had it existed as distinct from the presiding elder or elders of each congregation. He has left us a description, somewhat minute, of the mode in which Sunday was observed, and baptism and the supper administered; but, in speaking of the person who conducted the service, and who appears to have been the highest officer then known in the Church, he calls him simply the "president of the brethren," language which savors much of the primitive simplicity.*

Originally there were several Presbyters or Bishops to each congregation, and Justin, it is true, mentions but one. Here then seems to have been a change, but such as is easily accounted for. Among the original Presbyters, one would, of course, preside, for the sake of order; and the office of president, if not originally perpetual, appears to have soon become such. To this office the term Bishop came afterwards to be restricted. But this was not yet the case. The presiding Presbyter might be, and no doubt was, even in Justin's day, sometimes called Bishop, or *the* Bishop of the congregation, by way of eminence, his office giving him a certain rank and dignity. But we have proof that he was not yet regarded as belonging to a distinct order.

I may be told that the evidence from Justin on this point is only of the negative kind. Admit it; I must be permitted to observe, that, all circumstances taken into the account, this evidence is, in the present case, of no small weight.

But we have other which is positive. Irenæus, who was bishop of Lyons in Gaul, and lived some years after Justin, speaks indiscriminately of the "succession of Presbyters," and "succession of Bishops," from the Apostolic times, a fact to be explained only on the supposition that both, in his view, belonged to one order, and were in this respect equal, though one of them being chosen, or succeeding by virtue of age, to the presidency, would acquire the title of chief or first Presbyter, called by Justin the president of the brethren, and frequently, as I have said, Bishop of the congregation. Distinct traces of the old doctrine of the identity of Bishops and Presbyters, as regards order, occur

* Apol. I. pp. 95–98. Ed. Thirlb.

also in the writings of Clemens of Alexandria, and Tertullian, in the early part of the third century, and even later.

The testimony of Jerome, who flourished late in the fourth century, and who was the most learned man and profoundest antiquary of his time, is very express. He speaks of the origin of Bishops as distinguished from Presbyters. He shows from the writings of the New Testament that they originally constituted one order, but afterwards, "*as a remedy to schism*," he says, "one was elected to preside over the rest." Though in his day Bishops alone were considered as having power to ordain, it was not so from the first; for in Alexandria, so late as the days of Heraclas, and Dionysius, they made and ordained their own Bishops, and had done so from the days of Mark the Evangelist, the reputed founder of the Alexandrian Church.* Those Bishops, as it appears from the illustrations employed by Jerome, one of which is the making of an Arch-Deacon by Deacons, were evidently viewed, not as belonging to a distinct order, but only as having a certain preëminence conferred by election. They were, in fact, little more than a sort of perpetual moderators.

And such, as late as the commencement of the twelfth century, were the Bishops of the Waldenses, a primitive and unlettered people, long concealed amid the secluded recesses of the Cottian Alps, to which they had retired during the persecutions under the early Emperors.†

Soon the dawn of the Reformation appeared, and the doctrine of the original equality of Bishops and Presbyters was among the first to be recovered. We find Wiclif, at whose "torch all succeeding reformers more effectually lighted their tapers," asserting it in the fourteenth century, and Cranmer and most of the founders of the Anglican Church early in the sixteenth trod in his steps. The doctrine then and some time afterwards, was, that ordination is the "ancient right" of Presbyters, and that there was originally no difference between them and Bishops. That the latter are *jure divino*, superior, constituting a distinct order, and having the exclusive right to ordain, and that they are indispensable to the existence of a true Church, was not, I believe, maintained in Protestant England, till some enthu-

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* Epist. ad Evagr.

† Blair's History of the Waldenses. Edinburgh, 1833.

siasts among the Presbyterians or Independents contended that their own form of polity and no other could be extracted from the Bible. The Episcopalians then "found out that one claim of divine right was best met by another." * Hooker, some time their oracle, often, however, but ill understood, maintained that no form of ecclesiastical polity was found in the Bible, and, if found there, might be lawfully changed, expediency requiring it. Laud, while yet a member of the university, showing the spirit of the future man, undertook the defence of the divine right and necessity of Bishops, in his exercise for the degree of Bachelor of divinity, and, for his temerity, received — a college censure. The learned Selden, the best read in ecclesiastical antiquity of any man of his time, turned the doctrine of the divine right into a jest, and Usher was too great an antiquary to be ignorant that Presbyters formerly ordained.† But it is not my purpose to give a history of opinions.

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* Hallam's "Constitutional History of England," Vol. I. p. 922.

† The good sense and moderation of many of the old advocates of Episcopacy, some of them among the brightest ornaments of their church, should put some modern writers to the blush. If those who assert, that, from the time of the Apostles to the Reformation, "no other form of government but the Episcopal had ever been known to the Christian Church," mean, by the "Episcopal form of government," such as is at this day established in England, they must be prepared to hear either their learning or their honesty called in question. They must know, if they have ever dipped into the original writings of primitive antiquity, that a Bishop, for some time after the name came to be generally appropriated to the first or presiding Presbyter, had charge only of a single parish or congregation, and was in fact, no more than what may be called a congregational or parochial Bishop. They must know that no such thing as a Diocesan Bishop then existed. Ærius in the fourth century, instead of being "the first person who ever thought of confounding Bishops and Presbyters," as it is pretended (Le Bas' "Life of Wiclif," p. 300,) only asserted the old doctrine. St. Luke and St. Paul had certainly confounded them before him. The doctrine of their identity, however, had become in his day in a measure obsolete. He attempted to revive it, and, meeting the usual fate of reformers, was treated as an innovator.

There is something peculiarly disingenuous, to use no harsher epithet, in the mode of appeal to antiquity sometimes adopted by the friends of Episcopacy. Thus, because the term Bishop occurs in the early writers, as the name of a church officer, they give their readers to understand that Bishops, such as we now have them, then existed. They must know, as I have said, that it was not so. A sort of Episcopacy was early introduced, to be sure, but it was not Diocesan Episcopacy.

Thus far I have treated of the question of ordination in reference to the Episcopal controversy, which is the attitude in which it has been generally viewed. We infer the validity of Presbyterian ordination, strictly so called, in opposition to the Episcopal claim, from the fact, that the original Bishops, the only ones known to Scripture or antiquity, were simply Presbyters. Of this fact we think we have the clearest historical proofs. I have but hinted at the nature of these proofs. I have not attempted to spread them before you in full, nor shall I. I wish to take broader ground, and discuss the question of ordination, not simply with reference to the Episcopal controversy, but to its general merits; especially as I discover, as I think, in a portion of the community, great remaining misapprehensions on the subject of ecclesiastical power, usage, and polity, some of them affecting important rights.

I am to speak of the nature of ordination, to show what is its purport, and to whom the right or power to ordain belongs. In doing this, I must touch briefly on the spirit and end of Christianity, the character of the ministry, and the nature and primitive constitution of the church.

Jesus left no form of external polity, nor could he, consistently with the purpose he had in view, have ordained any as invariable and permanent. He came, not to introduce any partial, temporary, and local institution, but to give to the world, the whole world, and to all future ages, a religion suited to man's spiritual and progressive nature, — a religion which, recognising the soul's freedom, worth, and immmortality, labors to rescue it from the withering embrace of sin, to endow it with inward piety and strength, minister to its growth in godlike virtue and benevolence, and procure for it pardon, peace, and unfading joy in a final union with its Father. Its end is the sanctification, improvement, and progress of natures formed in the glorious image of the Divinity. It descends from heaven to bear the human soul up thither. It comes to speak of that better world where is the spirit's home; of that eternity, through which its thoughts even now wander, and for which it would fit and educate it.

The Bishops of primitive times were all equal, each being the Pastor of a single flock. "One altar, one Bishop," was the maxim. He was a mere Presbyter-bishop, "unbeneficed, unrevenued, and unlorded."

Such being the leading principle and end of Christianity, it is easy to see in what relation it stands to forms and outward polity. It is and must be essentially a spiritual religion, not a religion cramped, confined, and encumbered by forms and ceremony.

Forms, trappings, and a fixed polity are almost necessarily local, and will hardly bear being transplanted. They have an affinity with the soil in which they spring up; they are associated with modes of thinking, usages, and feelings, which are perpetually varying with time, and which no two nations possess in common. In proportion as they are multiplied, the religion which prescribes them acquires a narrow and local character. It may be suited to a particular time and spot, or mode of political organization, but admits not of general extension, and perpetuity. Such was Judaism with its multitude of rites, its priesthood, and its temple-service. But how different Christianity, which teaches us that God's altar is the humble heart, that we may in any place lift up holy hands to him; that the universe is his temple, and the true worshipper, he who worships him in spirit and in truth, whether in edifices reared by human skill, or beneath the broad canopy of the overhanging heavens; that his kingdom is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy.

Forms are from their nature stern and unyielding. They have no expansive power corresponding with the capacity of growth in the human intellect. Had Christianity, then, clothed itself with them as a garment never to be put off, it would have been in a condition to have been left behind in the progress of society. And therefore it has avoided them. It has satisfied itself with introducing into the soul the germ of a new and better life, leaving it to the nurture which shall best promote its healthy growth, and vigorous and beautiful manifestations. The seed was sown in the field of the world, and all kindly influences are sent down from above, but no mode of culture is prescribed. That is left to be determined by human judgment, by the condition and wants of the age, by times and seasons.

A visible priesthood, assuming a fixed and unalterable character, partakes of the inconveniences of all forms; in the progress of the human mind it must be outgrown; it is opposed to the free spirit, the essential principles, and end

of Christianity; and revives a distinction, which, as we are taught to believe, was to perish with Judaism.

There can be no sacred *caste* among Christians. By the essential principle of the Gospel, all believers are consecrated. They are spoken of as a spiritual priesthood. Christianity recognises no other. So the Apostles labored to show. The old distinction, they tell us, was no longer to subsist. All were brought near to God; all, as we are assured, have immediate access to the one universal Father. No sacerdotal mediators, I mean, regarded as a distinct and sacred class, are needed. They belong to an infant and rude age, which readily cherishes the belief of a character of peculiar sanctity in its lawgivers and priests. But the religion of Jesus encourages no such elements of superstition. He came not to render the mind the slave of a debasing fear, not to strengthen, endow, and perpetuate a priesthood (I use the term in its technical sense), but to do it away for ever.

Who then, it may be asked, are Christian ministers, and what is the character of the ministry? Jesus has himself told us who they are, and what is the nature of their office, and expressly proposed himself as their pattern. "Even," says he, "as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." The Christian ministry then is an office of help, a work, a benevolent labor. It has no character of sacredness except what duty, conscience, the religious obligation to do good gives to it. No other was attributed to it in the first ages, as a slight reference to its origin and history will abundantly show.

The early ministers were not priests, as the term is used to designate a separate *caste*, nor were viewed as such. The synagogue, and not the temple, furnished, I say not the exact model, but certainly the germ of the institution. Christianity, I may say, sprung up in the synagogues. They were appropriated to the teaching of religion among the Jews, the priests of the temple not being the ordinary instructers of the people. In the synagogues was Moses preached; in them the first heralds of the cross proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah; in them Paul, as we are told, taught every Sabbath day, preaching Christ to the people. They had their interpreters, their rulers, their elders and deacons,

their angel or messenger, and those who taught in them were called pastors or shepherds.

Several of these names and offices passed into the Christian Church, and nothing could be more natural than the transition. The early Christians were chiefly converts from Judaism, and for a time continued to form a part of the Jewish community, to observe Jewish rites, and especially to worship in the synagogue every seventh day. On being expelled from the religious assemblies of the Jews, and forced, in consequence, to adopt some form of worship, and some mode of regulating the affairs of their public meetings, they would as matter of convenience, as well as from attachment and habit, take along with them as many of the old institutions and usages as were suited to the genius of the new religion. Of course they would discard the priesthood, but retain the pastors and teachers. These were not regarded as possessing any character of peculiar sanctity; that belonged to the robed priests of the temple, to an institution which stood in meats and drinks, and fleshly ordinances, making nothing perfect. They held not their office by divine right or appointment, as did the posterity of Aaron. They were not a distinct order. Nor were the early Christian ministers. They were elected by universal suffrage, for the infant communities of Christians were so many little democracies; they were Pastors or Bishops of the parish, strictly congregational Bishops, independent of all other Bishops, but accustomed to take no step in an affair of any moment without the concurrence of their people. They were to watch over and feed the flock, and for this were set apart by a ceremony called ordination.

And what was this? its nature, form, and purport? To ordain, according to the original signification of the term, is to appoint or choose to an office or trust. In its technical, or ecclesiastical sense, it is to put in possession of such office or trust. It is simply a ceremony of investiture, the installing or putting into an office previously bestowed.

There is nothing peculiar in the form of it, adopted by the early Christians, and still essentially retained by most sects. The same, or something similar, had been in use among the Jews on solemn occasions from patriarchal times. In praying over a person, they laid their hands on him. Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph, laying his hands on

their heads. The prophets laid their hands on the sick, and besought Heaven to heal and to save. After Joshua had been appointed by divine command to succeed Moses, the latter "laid his hands on him and gave him a charge." * And Jesus, you recollect, observed the same ceremony, when little children were brought to him, laying his hands on them and blessing them.

That the early Christians, Jews as they were, should have retained so common and familiar a ceremony in setting apart the officers of their several assemblies, need not surprise us. Its meaning was perfectly well understood, and there was nothing exceptionable in it. It was highly appropriate and fit. It was not regarded in itself as conferring any authority or character. † It was the act of solemnly committing to a person, a charge or office which had been previously assigned him. Certainly it was fit that such an act, the office being a responsible one, should be rendered as impressive as possible. It was fit that prayer for a divine blessing should form part of it, and this according to a primitive and familiar usage was accompanied, as matter of course, with the laying on of hands.

Such and so simple is the origin, and such the primitive meaning, of the ecclesiastical rite of ordination. It is not of divine institution, and is to be defended only on the ground of its intrinsic propriety and a regard to Apostolical example. As a ceremony, undoubtedly a superstitious importance has been often attached to it. We speak of its validity. That word, I suppose, would never have been heard of in this connexion, had the primitive idea of ordination been retained. The appointment, or election, confers all the power and rights, whatever they are, pertaining to the ministry. Ordination confers none.

As it confers no power or right, neither can it be supposed in the judgment of reason, to confer any fitness or qualification for the office of the ministry, or produce any

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* Numbers xxvii. 23.

† By the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, and by prayer, the Holy Ghost was given to believers generally, and not simply to the officers of their several fraternities. Besides, the effect was a miraculous one, and confined, as I suppose all sound theologians will now admit, to the Apostolic age. See among other passages, Acts viii. 15, 17, 18, and xix, 6.

effect other than is produced by all solemn acts into which devotion enters. The indelible character we must reject as a figment of the schools, and, even should we admit it, the case would not be altered. For, though a mysterious something, no one can tell what, is on this hypothesis imparted; no one, I suppose, can explain how, — the individual possesses all the intellectual and moral qualities, habits, affections, gifts, and acquisitions which he possessed before, and no more. He remains the same being; and, if he was unfit for the ministry before, he is so still. The ceremony through which he enters it, solemn though it be, and fitted to produce a deep impression of responsibleness, makes him neither more wise, eloquent, nor learned; neither assists him to think, nor to express his thoughts with justness, force, and pertinency.

If any peculiar qualification for the ministry, any endowment, moral or spiritual, any new faculty of acquiring, illustrating, and enforcing the truths of nature or of revelation, any Christian affection, virtue, or grace were to be conferred by the rite, when performed in a particular way, we might be anxious about the mode, and we might talk of its validity or invalidity. But, viewing it as a mere human ceremony, an initiatory act, by which the relation of Pastor and People, before virtually subsisting, is publicly recognised, with such forms as appear most impressive, and especially with prayer for the divine favor and all propitious influences, we feel that its whole efficacy as a religious rite, depends on the sincerity with which it is performed. Any mode of it is valid, which usage has sanctioned as such, or which the parties interested agree to adopt as a ceremony of investiture or initiation, and the mode in use among our New-England fathers as much so as any other. The laying on of hands cannot be regarded as absolutely essential, being, as I said, but an accidental accompaniment of prayer, founded on Jewish usage, and having only an emblematic signification, perhaps originally designed simply to designate the individual for whom prayer was made, and being no more necessary to its efficacy than the posture, whether of standing or kneeling, in which it is uttered.

But whence does the power or right to ordain emanate? Who are the possessors of it? The people. In strict propriety it belongs to them to ordain, either by themselves or

by such as they shall invite or delegate to the office. And by the people, I mean the congregation or Parish. The primitive meaning of the word Church *(ecclesia)* is assembly or congregation. This meaning it always bears in the New Testament and writings of the ancient Christians, except when used in an extended sense to designate the whole community of believers, who were sometimes called the church or congregation of Christ, that is, his people, just as the Jews were termed, in the Old Testament, the church or congregation of God, or people of God, which were equivalent expressions.* This is the only exception. The term when not so used, was always employed in the New Testament, or by primitive antiquity, to signify the body of believers accustomed to meet for public worship in one place, under their own officers, that is, the whole Parish.†

When a vacancy occurred in the office of Bishop or Pastor, the whole Parish met to choose a successor, and he was elected by the suffrage of the whole people. Of this fact we have ample evidence in the old writers, and even in Cyprian himself, a strenuous asserter of the power and privileges of his order, and therefore an unexceptionable witness. That the right of election belongs to the people, is, I suppose, as agreeable to the principles of sound republicanism, and all rational principles of Christian liberty, as to the united voice of primitive antiquity. The right to elect, includes, as I conceive, the right to ordain, or this is deduced from it as a legitimate consequence. If the people do not possess this right, then they have not power to consummate their own act, and the right of election is reduced to a mere nullity.

And this is the doctrine of the Cambridge Platform itself, which says, expressly, "If the people may elect, which is the greater, and that wherein the substance of the office doth consist, they may much more ordain, which is the less, and but the accomplishment of the other." Those who appeal to that instrument, as of authority, and they are a numerous class, must in consistency, I should think, maintain that the religious society, or Parish, has not the right of choosing a

* So the "whole church." or "congregation" of Israel; and the "whole people of Israel" were expressions of the same import.

† Unless, perhaps, in one or two instances used to designate a sort of domestic assembly, or body of believers.

Pastor, or they must admit that it possesses the right to ordain. At the time the instrument in question was framed, the Church or body of communicants, as distinguished from the Parish, had by law the sole right to elect the minister of the Parish. When that law was repealed, and the right of choosing its own Pastor was restored to the Parish, or people, the right to ordain, or to issue letters missive, to call a council to perform the act, should, upon the principle of the Platform itself, also have been considered as belonging to the Parish. Yet, strange as it may seem, it is now strenuously contended by multitudes, professed admirers too of the Platform, that although the Parish may elect, the Church, regarded as a distinct and independent body, only can ordain. That is, as it is explained, the Parish may elect a Teacher, but they cannot make a Pastor; that teacher will be a "mere civil officer," not a minister of the Gospel. I am not, as you might suspect, dealing in fiction. I am stating a doctrine which is seriously and soberly asserted and defended.

Let us look, for a moment, at the reasoning employed in support of this most extraordinary doctrine. The people, religious society, or Parish, not being, as we are gravely told, an ecclesiastical body, can perform no ecclesiastical act; it cannot ordain, nor call a council whose acts shall have any validity.

This argument rests on a false assumption. The truth is, a religious society, congregation, or Parish *is* an ecclesiastical body, and the only one known to Scripture or antiquity. As an association for a religious object, what is it, in its essence, spirit, and end, if not an ecclesiastical body? As such, it is authorized to perform all ecclesiastical acts, that of ordination included. It is absurd to call it a religious society, yet deny that it possesses such authority. From its very nature and constitution it possesses it; possesses it by the principles of the Gospel, reason, and ancient usage.

In opposition to my argument drawn from the state of the ancient Parishes, it will be said, I know, that all the members of those Parishes were communicants, and their successors, therefore, at the present day are our churches, and not our religious societies. This inference is unsound. All the members of the ancient societies may have been communicants; I suppose they were, for, if we except the catechumens, all Christian worshippers were so. But this fact is

fatal to the theory I am opposing, and on it I found one of my principal arguments against it. The early religious societies embraced all the converts in the place, that is, all Christians. Our modern churches do not, unless we are prepared to say that only communicants can be Christians. This principle, I believe, is sometimes assumed, but no argument is necessary to show that it is inadmissible. Whole sects, it is well known, reject the rite of the supper, believing it to have been a temporary institution, and not designed to be perpetuated in the Church. And in all our religious societies there are many, who, for the same or other reasons, neglect its observance, to whom, however, we should not be justified in denying the name and character of Christian worshippers. As members of a religious society, united for Christian worship, they are, according to the primitive sense of the term, Christians, and as such, are entitled, upon the broad principles of Christian liberty, to act with the religious community of which they are members, on all questions touching the Pastoral relation and office.

Before it can be pretended that our present churches succeed to the ancient Parishes, it must be shown that they embrace all the Christians belonging to the religious societies or Parishes with which they are connected, as distinguished from unbelievers or heathen. This would be difficult. In many of our Parishes very sincere and pious Christians may be prevented from joining the church, as it is expressed, from an unwillingness to subscribe a creed which they believe to be repugnant alike to reason and Scripture. Grotius, in a short piece, full of good sense, in which he discusses the question, whether we are always under obligation to communicate by the symbols of bread and wine, states three cases in which he thinks a person would be justified in declining communion, — when the terms of communion require, either expressly or tacitly, an acknowledgment of doctrines, to the truth of which he cannot assent; — when communion, instead of serving, as originally intended, to testify our fellowship with all who manifest a spirit of Christian piety, is made equivalent to a declaration, that we acknowledge as Christians, only the members of the sect or sects with which we communicate; denying the name to others who exhibit just as much of Christianity in their lives; — and when, by abstaining from communion, we may

avoid identifying ourselves with a party, and so be enabled the better to discharge the duties of benevolence and charity towards the several sects or classes into which Christians are divided.* From these and other causes, perhaps from false diffidence, from erroneous notions of the nature of the ordinance, and conscientious scruples about a fitness for partaking it, many very devout persons of exemplary lives, and such as in all equitable judgment ought to be regarded as Christians, may abstain from communion, though they are far from denying that the rite was meant to be perpetual. Times have changed. Our churches now by no means embrace all the Christianity in the Parish. Until they do so, until it can be shown, as I have said, that the communicants alone are entitled to the name of Christian worshippers, and the rest are Heathen, Jews, "Turks, or Infidels," there is no pretence for denying to the members of a religious society generally, authority to act in all matters pertaining to the pastoral relation. In truth and propriety, the successors of the ancient Parishes are not our churches, but our religious societies or Parishes, as bodies of Christian worshippers, each individual of which is authorized, by the free principles of the Gospel, to decide for himself, whether or not he is under obligation, to partake of the memorial rite as administered, and what circumstances justify him in omission.

To return to the subject of ordination, I contend, as it will be seen, for no one mode of election or of ordination. I am an advocate for liberty. All I contend for is the power and right of each religious society to perform all acts necessary to constitute a Pastor, by itself, or by such persons as it shall select, and in such way, and by such ceremonies, as it shall deem fit, orderly, and scriptural. This right, as I have said, is denied; but I have never yet met with one solid argument against it, nor do I see how religious freedom can stand without it. My position is, that whatever mode of proceeding a religious society or parish may think fit to adopt, or to sanction by their silent acquiescence, is valid upon the primitive idea, that the Pastor or Bishop is the minister of the people, and made by and for them. The power to ordain, as well as to elect, their own pastors, is the right of all Christian congregations, and the mode of exercising this right is simply a question of expediency. In taking steps prelimi-

* An Semper Communicandum per Symbola.

nary to ordination, they may or may not request the church to unite with them, or act for them. It cannot act as an independent power, — but as the organ of the Parish, and in virtue of authority derived from it. Its action or its coöperation is not necessary to give validity to any act of the parish, and affects not in the least the power or right of the Pastor, as regards the administration of any Christian ordinance.

Should the Parish, the exigency of the case requiring it, proceed to perform the ceremony of ordination by their own immediate act, or by such of their number as they may see fit to designate, the person so ordained would undoubtedly possess all the powers, rights, and immunities of a Christian minister. Certainly, it cannot be proved from Scripture or antiquity, that his ordination is invalid, or that the rites, as administered by him, are not administered according to the intention of Christ, as strictly as in those cases in which the ordinary usage, in regard to ordination, has been complied with. That usage being only of human authority, and binding simply as matter of decency and order, is not to be superstitiously adhered to, to the great and manifest detriment of a religious society, perhaps to an abandonment of the rights of a majority of its members. No religious community or Parish can be required to forego the advantages of a stated ministry, such as is acceptable to the majority, because they do not choose, or are unable, forsooth, to procure ordination upon the model of the Cambridge Platform, or according to rules acknowledged at the Lambeth House. What authority had a little knot of New-England divines, assembled here some hundred and seventy-five years ago, to settle for all future time, what form of polity is, or is not, "set forth" in the Bible? As Protestants, we acknowledge no such authority in any man, or body of men. We like not a Protestant Pope or conclave, any better than a Catholic one.

Of the two simple and impressive rites of Christianity I would speak with all reverence; but it is a mistake, growing out of the former superstitious belief in regard to their nature, to suppose that the administration of them is among the most important duties of a minister; that it is of greater moment than teaching or consolation, for example, or that they require, for their valid observance, any character of peculiar sanctity, any qualification, in fact, in him who administers them, which is not also required to enable him to

lead the devotions of his flock acceptably in the solemn act of prayer. No other qualification seems to have been thought necessary in primitive times. All Christians, I believe, were supposed to have authority, as matter of right, to administer the supper. It was administered, of course, as order and decorum required, by the President, Bishop, or Pastor of the congregation, when there was one, but not in virtue of any superior sanctity imagined to be conferred by the ceremony of ordination. All believers, as before remarked, were regarded as consecrated. Every Christian was a priest, and, as such, was authorized, circumstances of time and place permitting, to perform all religious acts, and among the rest, if he chose, the administration of the memorial rite.

The ordinance appears to have been originally observed by Christians, when none of the order of Bishops or Priests was of the company, and this was a well-known usage in the time of Tertullian, who, in more than one instance, refers to it. "Where there is none of the ecclesiastical order," he says, "you administer the sacramental rite, and baptize, and are alone a priest to yourself." That is, according to the natural force of the expression, you are accustomed to administer it, to baptize and perform all sacerdotal acts. He evidently alludes to a familiar practice, which was conformable to his own sentiments and the common sentiments of the age. All Christians were authorized to administer the ordinance; whether or not they should do it, was a question, not of the right, but of the fit and expedient.*

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* De Exhort. Cast. See also, De Baptismo, et de Coronâ Militis. The attempt has been made, but without success, to set aside the testimony of Tertullian on this point, on the ground that his meaning has been misunderstood. Rigault, in a corrected edition of some of the works of Tertullian, published by him in 1628, took notice of a passage from which, as he asserted, the right of the laity under certain circumstances, to administer the ordinances, might be inferred, and a long controversy ensued, which was finally carried to Rome. It was during this controversy that Grotius wrote his "Dissertatio de Cœnæ Administratione ubi Pastores non sunt." See also the short piece, already alluded to, accompanying the dissertation on the question, "An Semper Communicandum per Symbola." Opp. Theol. T. iii. pp. 507, 510, Amst. 1679. Dodwell, a violent partisan writer, collected and published the several pieces called forth by the controversy, and added a dissertation of his own. Some account of the controversy may be found in the *Biblioth. Univ. et Hist.* of Le Clerc, T. i. p. 133,

And this, undoubtedly, is the true doctrine. We hear little of it, however, after the time of the abovementioned Father. Already Christian ministers, impelled by pride and ambition, began to assume a rank and powers, wholly unknown to the simple Pastors of primitive times. No longer content with the humble titles and offices derived from the synagogue, they arrogated to themselves the name, dignity, and all the "pomp and circumstance" of the hierophants of the Temple. Nor did they disdain to borrow now and then a shred from Paganism. The leading principle of Christianity was forgotten, and soon a visible priesthood stepped forth in "palls and mitres," and "deformed and fantastic dresses, fetched," as one has said, "from Aaron's old wardrobe, or the flamen's vestry." Whatever they touched was hallowed. They were hallowed; and the rite of the supper being, as matter of propriety, usually administered by them, would soon acquire, in the view of the people, a corresponding character of sanctity. On the other hand, superstitious notions of the nature and importance of the rite would favor their projects of aggrandizement. When it came to be believed that a new quality was superadded to the elements, and at length that they were changed during the act of consecration into real flesh and blood, the priest would be naturally regarded as a being little inferior to the divine. He could do what no one, on whom the indelible character had not been impressed, could effect, and what it would be unlawful in him to attempt.

On no better foundation does the opinion, which denies authority to administer the Supper to all who have not received priestly consecration, rest. I place the rite precisely on the ground on which it stood so late as the time of Tertullian, two hundred years after the birth of Christ. The grace and ordinances of the gospel are committed to all Christians, that of the supper included; and the right to administer it belongs to all, belongs to private Christians as Christians, and the direct exercise of this right, the necessity of the case demanding it, is lawful and fit. The Pastor of a religious society or parish is authorized as a Christian to ad-

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and T. iv. p. 94. See also Campbell's "Lectures on Ecclesiastical History," iv. and vii., and Neander's "History of the Christian Religion and Church," p. 199, who, however, quotes Tertullian very loosely.

minister the ordinance; and, being chosen to his office by an act of the people, he is authorized, by virtue of such office, to administer it to the communicants belonging to the parish. The authority publicly to administer it is not derived from any act of the Church, technically so called, formally recognising him as its Pastor. It pertains to his office as Pastor of the religious society or Parish.

The object of the New-England Fathers was to restore the polity of the primitive churches. Something of it they did restore, but not the whole, nor could they. Something they dropped, and something added. They proceeded on the principle that Christianity recognises no visible and distinct priesthood; that a Pastor or Teacher becomes such by the act of the people choosing him, and his own acceptance; that ordination is "but the putting a man into his place and office, to which he had a right before by election;" that it confers no power or character, being, as it is expressed, "like the installing of a magistrate in the commonwealth;" and that it may be rightfully conducted, the exigency of the case requiring it, by the lay brethren themselves. *

So far they adhered to the ancient doctrine. But they too "hugged the Popedom." They set up a pretence of "divine right," which they denied to the Bishops. They asserted that their form of polity was "exactly described in the word of God." They claimed for their churches power formally and expressly granted by Jesus Christ, in virtue of which their acts carried with them a divine sanction, in such sort that their Pastors or teachers were to be considered as "called of God, as was Aaron"; such is their language. The broad line of distinction they drew between Church and Parish, however natural in their situation, perhaps even salutary, involved, too, a departure from the original principle; for no such distinction, as before said, was in primitive times known. There is no pretence of antiquity in its favor.

Is the distinction then to be done away? I recommend no such thing. But I would have it distinctly understood that it is founded solely in expediency. If any members of the congregation are disposed to associate for the purpose of mutual counsel and improvement, and to perform such acts and duties, provision for the administration of the Supper

* Platform, ch. 9.

among the rest, as the body of worshippers shall voluntarily leave to them, and the laws of the land shall sanction, there is no objection. More than this, such associations are commendable. But then these individuals have no authority to rear a wall around the altar of communion by requiring of all who approach it subscription to a doctrinal creed, or a narration of what, in the language of sects, is technically called a conversion. History records no more palpable act of usurpation than this. To what does it amount? Why, a few individuals, half a dozen, it may be, undertake to say to the rest, You shall not partake of the memorial rite Christ has instituted for the use of all who are called by his name, unless you acknowledge *our* views of his person and instructions to be correct, nor unless you can prove that a work of grace, according to *our* notions of it, has been wrought in your hearts.

A few individuals undertake to say this to a community of Christian worshippers! Is this the boasted liberty of Protestantism? As well might they presume to say, You shall not enter the temple of Christian worship, which your own hands have reared; you shall not be permitted to listen to the voice of instruction, consolation, and hope from the lips of the teacher you nourish with your substance, except on conditions we see fit to impose. To administer the ordinances is as much the duty of that teacher as to preach, and to administer them to all who ask it, acknowledging, at the same time, their belief of the primitive article, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and living in consistency with their profession. And they have just cause of dissatisfaction, if, allowing himself to be fettered by the will and determination of a few individuals, not commissioned to act in behalf of the rest, he refuse so to administer them; and they are authorized, if they choose, expediency strongly urging it, to take the affair into their own hands, and insist on other and more liberal and more Scriptural terms of baptism and communion.*

* I say *authorized*. I do not suppose, however, that cases can often occur among the class of Christians to which we belong, rendering the exercise of this authority expedient. Perhaps the constitution of our religious societies, though not exactly conformable to the original model, is as well adapted to promote Christian piety and virtue, and secure the general welfare, as any which could be now devised. I am no advocate generally for violent and sudden changes; certainly

But is not the Church, it is asked, as a voluntary association authorized, like all other societies, to say on what terms a person shall become and continue a member? Decidedly not, if, by the terms adopted, any individual of the Parish with which such Church is connected, is debarred the use of any one Christian privilege, except on terms which Jesus, the sole lawgiver of his people, has not prescribed, and which are therefore not obligatory on Christians. And for this plain, and as I think, satisfactory reason, they are not authorized to do any thing which shall impair or destroy the rights of their fellow worshippers, or in any way prove to be an infringement of Christian liberty. The minister is minister of the Parish, the whole Parish, and as a Pastor or teacher is accountable to no other earthly power; and no other body, no mere fragment of the Parish, can rightfully step in to define his duties to the rest, or attempt to control him in the discharge of them, whether preaching, or the administration of the ordinances.

So long as the members of the church, technically so called, manage their affairs with becoming liberality, making voluntary provision for those observances and institutions of Christianity, of which the Parish, as a Parish, do not choose to take the charge, throwing no unreasonable obstacles in the way of a participation of them, they are, as before observed, to be honored for the service, and should be regarded with none but the most friendly feelings. But the moment they lay claim to power derived immediately from Christ, and wholly distinct from that possessed by the congregation as a society of free Christian worshippers, and of a nature to interfere with their rights, civil or religious, then their pretensions are to be resisted, as containing the germ of an antichristian usurpation.

The principle I have advocated, is, as I think, the true principle of Congregationalism, as the name implies. A Congregational society, by the principle of its constitution, acts, or should act, by its members, as a congregation. The attempt on the part of the communicants, comprising, as now generally, but a small proportion of the regular worshippers,

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not in this instance. I beg distinctly to state that I do not intend, in what I have said, to recommend any change in our present system of congregational order and polity. I am anxious only that the principle of religious liberty should be understood.

to control the will of the congregation, involves, as it seems to me, a violation of the essential principle of the order, as it certainly does of the principle of Christian liberty. The principle of Episcopacy is the power or rule of Bishops; of Presbyterianism, the power or rule of the Presbytery. So the principle of Congregationalism is the power or rule of the Congregation, — the people united for Christian worship. Doctrines, if I may be allowed the remark, are out of the question. The original Congregationalists never pretended that doctrines constituted the distinguishing mark of their sect. They asserted the contrary over and over again. The distinguishing character of the sect is polity, not doctrines. Those who contend that doctrines constitute its essential principle, betray either woful ignorance, or strange effrontery. It is difficult to believe them serious. There are Calvinistic and Arminian Episcopalians, and Calvinistic and Free-will Baptists. Shall the Calvinist turn to his Arminian, or his Free-will brother, and say, You are no Churchman, or no Baptist; you are gone out from us, and are not of us? A Congregationalist may be a Calvinist or an Arminian, a Trinitarian or a Unitarian. If a Calvinist, he may be of the old or the new school, but still a Congregationalist. The *doctrines* of the original Congregationalists are not now holden by any one class of their descendants in New England. If doctrines are the test, all have gone astray.

I am aware that the views I have advocated are regarded by a large portion of the religious community with a strong feeling of disapprobation, or even abhorrence. It is still contended, I know, that the church, regarded as a distinct and independent body, and embracing only communicants, exists by divine right, and possesses power derived immediately from Christ. This with many is a favorite doctrine, and one to which they attach peculiar importance. But I am constrained to say, that its truth, as it seems to me, is assumed without a shadow of proof. It is a doctrine, against which I see many formidable objections. It is at war with the great principle of Christian liberty, and amounts, as I view it, to a sort of Protestant Popery. No matter where the indelible character or power, supposed to be immediately communicated from heaven, resides, whether in Bishops, or in the brethren; it is equally dangerous in the one case, as

in the other, and just as likely to be turned into an instrument of oppression. Such an instrument it became in the hands of our New-England fathers, and may become such in the hands of their descendants.*

Let it not be said, that the principles I have defended, degrade the ministerial office. I contend for a ministry of usefulness, an earnest, enlightened, and effective ministry, a ministry of benevolence, and one which shall meet the intellectual and moral wants of the age. Such a ministry, I believe, must wield other instruments than those of superstition and terror. To secure a wholesome and enduring influence, and one which is every way desirable, it must not appeal chiefly to the coarser passions of human nature. Such appeals may produce a temporary effect, but an effect which is to be deprecated, as tending to injure the cause of true piety, and destroy or greatly impair the permanent usefulness of the ministry. The times demand something better. He who would now discharge faithfully his trust, as a minister of Christ, must not think to treat men as mere "children of a larger growth." He must show a respect for their understandings. He must not rely on the sanctity of his office, or on a principle of blind faith in his hearers. He must, under God, confide chiefly in the stirring power of Truth; confide in the weapons which she puts into his hands. From her armoury he must fill his quiver, and go forth in her strength. By truth, heavenly truth, truth

* If we look at the systematic operations by which, within a few years, the attempt has been made, and is still made, to crush the advocates of liberal sentiments, and chain down the human mind to the miserable and cheerless dogmas of the dark ages, we shall find that the power of the churches is the element chiefly relied on. Extraordinary efforts are made to swell the number of communicants by means of feverish excitements produced by the revival and other machinery. These constitute so many trained bands, which are taught to move forward in an unbroken mass, and through which the influence of an artful, exclusive, and sectarian clergy is brought to bear on society with a tremendous force. This influence is not the less because the power claimed in virtue of divine right is supposed to reside in the communicants generally, — in the brethren, and not in the clergy; for the latter, without giving occasion for the jealousy and odium which naturally attend a privileged order, are able effectually to appeal to the principle of superstition and fear, the tendency of which is to break down the courage, to overawe and enslave.

enlightening the understanding, quickening the conscience; truth, warning, urging, entreating, the Christian affections are excited and nourished, and the soul is raised to a divine life. Truth is its element; by that it is invigorated, and in it lives. By truth temptation is resisted, and the world overcome. By it religion triumphs, triumphs by her revelations of imperishable truth, and shall triumph. Empires fade and vanish, but the sceptre departs not from her hands; she sits, and shall sit, enthroned in the human spirit, that living temple, which she fills with her glory.

[For the Christian Examiner.]

Art. V. — *Remarks on Mystery.*

How wonderful to a simple, clear, and honest mind must it seem that *Mystery* could ever have been regarded as one of the characteristics of a *revelation*, — a revelation from God. What a bold paradox lies in the very statement! Besides, how untrue does it appear when we compare the religious man who has received that revelation with the infidel who has rejected it. How much less of mystery has the former to struggle with than the latter. Before the eye of the real Christian constantly the clouds are breaking and the darkness flying. Many an object to others dark has an intense illumination thrown over it by the sunlight of his religious faith. The Atheist, — the disbeliever, throws out darkness from his own mind upon what is plain even to the common and negligent understanding. He casts the dark mysteries of a dishonest heart over the fair face of creation and the course of God's providence. For without asserting that it is impossible for skepticism to be honest, we must express our conviction that the heart disbelieves far oftener than the intellect. There the corruption *commences*, which afterwards spreads through the whole mind.

From what has been said, it will be readily understood that we are opposed to the introduction of mystery into religion, and that we deny of course that the two are united in the Bible. We are so opposed, and we do thus

deny. And we express our sentiments on this subject now because we believe that a connexion, of which the Word of God says nothing, has been established between these essentially discordant principles by the doctrines and systems of men. But there is an objection which we may as well meet and dispose of at the threshold of our subject, — especially as its consideration will place more clearly before the mind the particular end we have in view. It may be said we are surrounded by mysteries, — and why, it may be asked, as they exist, should we not act with reference to them? They are the mysteries of God's power, — why should they not vitally affect the relation in which we stand to God? There are mysteries in creation and in Providence, why not also in Grace? And why, if God's dealings with our souls are mysterious, are we not concerned in mystery? The *existence* of mysteries we most fully admit. They exist in whatever we see or feel or hear. If we turn back upon ourselves and question our own souls as to their origin, and, passing our hands over the smooth flesh of our bodies, ask, Whence is this? — we shudder at our own existence, and tremble with the most mysterious sensations. There is indeed no lack of mysteries. This broad universe of worlds hung down from the throne above for our admiration, these souls of boundless capacities and boundless conceptions, these "thoughts that wander through eternity," existence in its million forms, with its miseries and joys, its progression and degradation, the whole creation compressing itself into the trembling imagination of a feeble man, — all these are in some sense mysteries. And it is the clearest thing in the world that they should be mysteries. For what must be the condition of that mind to which nothing should seem wonderful or strange? Must not all its attributes be infinities? Some things there are, which "the angels desire to look into." And should ignorant man be ashamed to say of many things, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, — it is high, I cannot attain unto it." So long as our knowledge is finite, so long will there be things that are mysteries to our minds. All beings of limited powers are encompassed with mysteries. Mysteries encompass *us* and will never cease to encompass us, — but it is important to be observed they will be ever-changing mysteries. They will rise in orders one upon the other, in endless succession, and suited to the numberless

changing ranks and orders of an intelligent existence. One mystery will vanish and another appear. We shall not be for ever perplexed with the same fixed, unexplained, and unexplainable difficulties. Mysteries will then *ever* surround us, not to perplex and afflict our spirits, but to excite in us perpetual growth, to enlarge our souls with endless expansion, and enable us to pursue with increasing vigor and delight the course of God's own glory as it spreads through the universe. In this view of the subject, to say that mysteries do exist, and ever will exist, is to say that we have entered upon a progress of knowledge which is never to end, that we have a curiosity the means for whose gratification are exhaustless. But we are chained within no iron wall of mystery, — holden in no dark and vile bondage never to be broken. To be sure, it is sometimes said we can never understand the essential nature of any thing. This is no more than saying there will always be something in the objects of our study which we do not understand. But we shall constantly be knowing something about them which we did not know before. This *nature of things*, of which we are ignorant, is a certain something which we cannot define. It is a convenient phrase to veil our ignorance. So long as we are learning something new, something of which we had no idea before, we cannot without presumption attempt to fix on any precise thing as never to be learned.

But notwithstanding the objection we have stated, and the concession we have made, we still deny the propriety of introducing mystery into religion. The general reason for this is, that religion is a thing to be understood, felt, acted on, a thing which is to effect the same object in all minds, and to exist as the same sentiment in all hearts. Now it is no man's duty to act with reference to a principle of which he has no comprehension, any more than it is the duty of the navigator to shape his course by the guidance of an invisible star. We are to act, not according to some quality in God's nature of which we are ignorant, but according to those requirements of his will of which we are assured.

There is then a propriety in discussing this question, — Is it right that mysteries should be introduced into religion? We wish to treat the subject under several divisions, and to present particular reasonings in respect to them. And in this more particular treatment of the bad effects of mystery in religion, we would employ three courses of remark,

corresponding to three distinct views of the subject. We would speak of Mystery in reference to the three points of Belief, Experience, Practice. There are, in other words, certain doctrines preached in which Mystery appears, there are certain mysterious feelings required, and still further certain duties, having principal reference to the affections, which are often enjoined in a mysterious and incomprehensible mode of preaching. Hitherto Mystery has been opposed only as it appears in the formal statement of intellectual points of belief; but we think there is ample ground for treating the subject in the other views we have mentioned. There seems to be as it were a *spirit* of Mystery which has several modes of manifestation, and, as it is this spirit to which we are opposed, we must oppose it in all its forms.

First then we speak of mysterious doctrines. In Deuteronomy, ch. xxix. 29, we find these words, — "The secret things belong unto the Lord: — but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." All the precepts, then, which the Jews were to regard, were so plainly revealed that they could *do* them. With mysteries they had no acquaintance and no concern. But what constitutes the secrecy, and what the revelation, of a truth? A truth is revealed when, being plainly set forth, it is fully comprehended by the mind. Every thing not revealed is a mystery. We suppose of course in this statement that a revelation, in its strict meaning, concerns only those things which human reason cannot surely grasp. And still further, if any truth be not understood by some particular mind, — to that mind it is not a truth, — to that mind it has had no revelation, — to that mind it is still a secret, a mystery. But it is said that the Bible proposes to our acceptance certain doctrines which are mysteries as much after the revelation as before. It is declared to be of the utmost importance that these doctrines should be admitted into the living faith of our minds, and should direct the conduct of our lives. It is affirmed indeed that on our belief and practice of them depends all our hope of salvation. But what more can be made out of this than that there are certain things in a revelation which are themselves unrevealed? Perhaps truths might be *alluded to*, in a revelation, which were not intended to be made known; but how is it possible they should be parts of the

revelation itself? Let us examine one of these doctrines for a moment. It is said there is a Trinity or Triunity in the Godhead. The Father is God, — the Son is God, — the Holy Spirit is God, — and these three make one God. The almost instinctive reply of a rational mind to this statement is, — How can this be? Three, each of whom is the Infinite God, make one God! Impossible! But the theologian stands ready with his argument. He says to the objector, You say you cannot see how God can be at the same time both *three* and *one*. But because you cannot perceive the *how* and *wherefore* of a truth, are you therefore forced to disbelieve it? Suppose I tell you the sun shines, — will you contradict that proposition because you cannot see *how* it is true? Will you, at the very moment you are dazzled by the beams of the great luminary, say it does not shine, because you cannot see and know how it shines? I tell you there is a God. Will you disbelieve his existence because you do not know *how* he exists? The first sensation which this argument, which is one that has actually been used, produces, will be one of surprise that the real question at issue should be so entirely lost sight of, and another substituted in its place. The difference lies here. We do not, it is true, see how the sun shines. But we do not see any impossibility or contradiction in his shining. Now we not only do not see how three and one are the same, but we do not see how they *can be* the same. We deny not only that there are three persons in the Godhead, and but one God, but we deny entirely the possibility of such a thing. And in regard to the other illustration, the case is still stronger. For while we admit we are not able to conceive how God exists, — yet, so far from our having a feeling of impossibility or contradiction that he should exist, we feel his existence to be absolutely necessary. We have as strong a feeling of necessity in favor of the existence of a God, as of impossibility against the doctrine of the Trinity.

No accumulation and force of evidence could operate to secure rational belief in a doctrine of this kind. In such a case there is no point in the mind upon which argument and proof can act; of course the mind is immovable by any supposed strength of evidence. Miracles might in vain be showered like rain-drops to prove that $3 + 2$ make 6. We ought rather to say that nothing could possibly be re-

garded as a miracle which should pretend to go to the establishment of such a point. God surely cannot desire to make that appear to us a truth, which, in the very nature and the very centre of the minds he has given us, we know to be false. We admit then that a proposition may be true, and may be proved to be true, when we are unable to understand something relating to the *manner* in which it is true; but we contend that no proposition can be true against the mind's resolute and instinctive feeling of impossibility. We believe in the infinitude of space. Why do we maintain that space is boundless? Because it is revealed in all its boundlessness to our eye? By no means. We maintain it because it is established as a truth beyond question by evidence from our own minds. So far from there being a feeling of impossibility against the correctness of our assertion, there is a feeling of necessity in its favor. We feel that it is impossible it should not be true. Yet surely no man can contend that we do see *how* it is true, or that we could without minds as measureless as nature. The trouble in respect to this mystery of the Trinity lies, not in its being embodied in unintelligible language, but in the plain self-contradictoriness of the ideas which that language presents. In this language the ideas oppose and neutralize each other, so that nothing is left on which the belief of the mind can fasten. There is as much denied in it as there is asserted. Thought destroys thought, and the result, so far as belief is concerned, is a perfect nullity. But, it is asked, shall we never admit into our minds two articles of faith which we cannot reconcile with each other? The answer is, there is a vast difference between our being unable to reconcile two things and those things being absolutely irreconcilable. We may sometimes be convinced that two things are consistent whose consistency we cannot perceive; but in certain cases our minds have the power of discerning an essential inconsistency. Some have inconsiderately confounded these two things, and have most presumptuously asserted doctrines to be irreconcilable, upon whose reconcilableness or irreconcilableness they had not the least power of deciding. We do not confound these things in our argument against the Trinity. Sometimes we can see the best reason in the world why we should not be able to reconcile two doctrines; we see this reason in the nature and relations of the doctrines themselves. But the

Trinity is a single doctrine irreconcilable with itself. We would abate no jot or tittle from the importance of religious faith. For the interests of such faith we are contending. For its value depends upon ascertaining its proper objects and the right conditions of its exercise. The evil of believing wrongly is proportionate to the advantage of believing rightly. We do not know that any other mystery of doctrine stands on precisely the same ground with the mystery of the Trinity. Other doctrines are consistent with themselves. But what shall we say of doctrines which, though they may not be irreconcilable, cannot be perceived by us to be consistent with each other? We say it is still competent for us to make the inquiry, Why are these doctrines not seen to be consistent? Is there good reason they should not be seen to be consistent? Does the nature of the case preclude our power and right to pass on the question of their consistency?

If these questions be answered in the affirmative, we may have the most perfect *satisfaction* in being unable to reconcile them. But, if these questions are so answered as to increase the mystery of the doctrines, we are not able to receive them with the same undoubting faith. Yet, even under these circumstances, if we are fully assured that they come as a revelation from God, we cannot without great guilt reject them. We doubt however very much whether this last case ever happens. We cannot see that harmonious consistency between the doctrines of God's prescience and man's free-agency, which we at the same time feel *may* exist, and which we believe does exist. We may imagine that we can follow out trains of argument from these two doctrines till they lead us into discordant results. And our precise idea of prescience may not harmonize with our particular view of moral freedom. But the doctrine of God's prescience, we should remember, is one which we can comprehend only in its obvious character, and not in its whole extent, — and this thought should make us cautious and humble. Some persons seem desirous of making these two doctrines inconsistent by defining *prescience* as synonymous with *foreordination.* Now is foreordination inconsistent with free-agency? I may understand it in a sense in which it is absolutely inconsistent with my view, and the common view, of free-agency. The doctrines cannot then both be

true in these senses. Still, we believe, they are by some asserted to be true in these very senses. Here, then, we have a mystery almost equal to the Trinity. Surely men should not make so earnest search to find such a mystery in the Bible, or labor with the engine of metaphysical reasoning to extort it from the Holy Book.

But we hasten to the second division of our subject, in which we wish to speak of what, for the sake of distinction, we have denominated mysteries of experience. The having possessed certain mysterious feelings is insisted on as a necessary pre-requisite to salvation; — mysterious, I say, because we cannot anticipate for ourselves what they will be in our own minds, nor, after their experience, can we communicate to others what they have been. They are feelings which cannot possibly originate from any dispositions we have within us; and we can have no conception of any thing which is in the nature of mind, and at the same time differs from any and all of our own mental acts. Others cannot understand them, because no person can understand the feelings of another but by sympathy, which is here of course precluded. We complain then that this character of *mystery* is attached to the feelings. We would not for a moment doubt that God may make communications of his Spirit to the minds of men. But we maintain that the feelings communicated are like the feelings we may naturally have in our own minds, — they accord with the constitution of our nature, — they do no violence to our powers and affections. And we would most seriously ask whether the Bible does not justify, nay, *require* this view. Does not Holy Writ speak of the communications of Divine Grace as consisting of what is clear and definite and accordant with what is high and noble in ourselves, — with that delight which, in the language of Paul, we have "in the law of God after the inward man"? And does not the same authority justify us when we maintain that these communications are made to all who, though subjected to that fearful struggle in which "the law of the members wars against the law of the mind," still cry out with the Apostle, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

If a man affirms that he has certain feelings which have been supernaturally delivered to him, we dare not treat his declaration with levity. But we ask him solemnly whether

he can distinguish those feelings from the feelings of his own mind. Have they such a peculiarity, — such a mystery about them that he can place his finger on them and say to himself, These came from God? Do they stand apart in an awful sanctity in his internal emotions, and with a calm holiness view his mind as angelic spirits may gaze on the troubled scenes of this earth? To these questions we firmly believe he must reply in the negative.

We dare not limit the intercourse of spirits. Nay, we dare not affirm of our own mind, that certain thoughts and feelings existing in it did not come from a superior Power. But we deny that men can identify particular thoughts and sensations as coming from God. To be sure the Apostles could do so; and we presume not to declare it impossible that God should choose to inspire a person even at this day. Yet we need not speak of the entire improbability of such a thing. A pious man indeed would naturally attribute his pious thoughts and feelings to God; but he would do this in the same sense in which he attributes to Him "every good and perfect gift." The mind, the thinking being, comes from God, and of course all thought and feeling has its primary source in his nature. But to attribute a *certain* set of feelings to Him, as the special and direct effusion of his spirit, is more than all this. We are not justified in specially referring to God certain sentiments we may have in the course of our religious experience, because they have something of novelty and strangeness about them. When we are under strong religious excitement it is natural and consonant to the nature of our minds, that we should experience a depth of humiliation, repentance, adoration or love, to which, in other circumstances, we have been unaccustomed. Besides, we often experience feelings as novel and strange on being newly situated as to other relations which have little connexion with the relation of our religious character. And, if we should follow the rule against which we contend, how large a share of those emotions which have made up the life of our hearts, should we invest with the mystery of a celestial origin.

There may and there do result most deadly consequences from ascribing, at the mere suggestion of a superstitious fancy, certain mental experiences to the action of special grace. When a religious process goes on in the mind with

great strength and rapidity, there is often a wild rush and extravagance of feeling, a rousing of the stronger passions, a lashing of the great deep of the soul into fury, which brings a man under the action of most powerful incentives, and prepares him for the most decided courses of conduct. Whatever motive may for the time gain the ascendency, bears his mind before it like a feather on the breeze. Suppose, while in this condition, he fixes upon certain motives and feelings, and resolves upon it that they have come from God, — and this is doubtless often done, — what an unspeakable sanctity must be thrown over these feelings and motives! What a blind and adoring obedience would be rendered to them! How would they be followed to the ends of the earth and to the gates of Death! A most dreadful and unholy power may thus be sanctified as the "power of God unto salvation," may be permitted to hold a stern, unresisted sway over the mind, and to break forth to the desolation of the lives and hearts of others. We read in the history of the Abbot of St. Cyran, whom the Jansenists regarded almost as an oracle, that "he had no doubts but that he was an instrument by whom the divine Being operates and works! and that he held generally that a pious man should follow the impulses of his mind, suspending all exercise of his judgment. And the opinion," continues our author, "was most deeply fixed in the minds of all the Jansenists that God himself acts and operates on the mind, and reveals to it his pleasure when all movements of the understanding and the will are restrained and hushed. Hence whatever thoughts, opinions, or purposes, occur to them, in that state of quietude, they unhesitatingly regard as oracular manifestations and instructions from God." * How many there are living at this moment, who, in respect to themselves, go to the full length of the Jansenist creed on this point. One of our own intimate acquaintances a few years since had an experience which may be brought to justify this remark. He felt his mind very much excited and quickened in the action of its powers. It ran through long and complicated processes of thought, like the electric fluid on crooked wires, and could master some of the most difficult problems in a moment of time. He was strongly per-

* See Murdock's Mosheim, Vol. III. pp. 383, 384, note.

suaded that he was under the special influence of the Holy Spirit. But after his restoration from this mental illness, he had quite as strong a persuasion that his belief about the Holy Spirit was entirely without proper foundation. We account for the wild extravagance of his first belief by the erroneous character of his religious views, — especially the error of supposing that he could distinguish the operations of the Spirit from those of his own mind.

The Spirit of Mystery has another mode of manifestation which is the last we shall mention. Sometimes it pervades the general cast and air of a minister's preaching. This kind of mystery will be a marked quality of the instructions and exhortations of some pulpits, while its appearance in others is quite infrequent. Some seem to think it their duty to consider Religion, as a general subject, as much in the light of mystery, and to speak of it as mysteriously as possible. It is to them a vast temple darkened with solemn obscurity, where every object shows dimly and every sound is uncertain, and in which they are to exercise a veneration the more awful and sacred because some of the things they revere are but half revealed, and others are entirely unknown and must have a fancied greatness thrown about them by the imagination. Thus do men worship dark feelings, which from their own hearts cluster about their own ignorance. Thus the reverence that would rise to its nobler and its only worthy objects rests upon earth, pours itself out before gloomy imaginings, and adores "the creature more than the Creator." How distressing must it be to a person seeking spiritual guidance, to hear the preacher discourse on what would seem, from the strong interest he takes in the subject, to be a matter of vital concern, so as not to be understood. Such a preacher seems to have so great a distrust of human nature, as to be unwilling to address it at all. We are all in darkness and trouble to hear him most earnestly beseeching us to do — *what* he cannot tell us, labor earnestly as he may. He does not present us with mysterious expositions of intellectual points of belief, nor does he mysteriously exhibit the mode of spiritual operations, — but he describes in the spirit of mystery the *dispositions* we must cherish and the *duties* we must perform. The subjects, in the treatment of which this spirit especially appears, generally relate to what are called the "terrors of the Lord." We trust our

readers will perceive what we mean. It is impossible to give a very definite delineation of that quality in preaching of which we speak; but we doubt not very many have had an experience in relation to this matter which so well corresponds to the idea of our description as to leave them at no loss in regard to it. Now we ask, — Is it merciful, — is it right, to cry out to a man that he is in danger of being crushed under the wheel of some dreadful calamity, and, in telling him how to escape, fail to give him the slightest assistance?

Suppose, during some conflagration, a person should suddenly awake and find himself in the upper room of a house surrounded by blazing and crackling timbers. In trembling helplessness he shows himself, from some high projection yet untouched by the fire, to those assembled for the purpose of its extinction. A voice rises above the din of the crowd and the roaring of the flames, assuring him that there is one last forlorn hope of escape, one way of communication with the ground not yet cut off by the devouring element. This way is described, yet so as not to be understood. A thousand voices echo the word, — "Escape! Escape!" yet still he stands as if charmed by the serpents of fire about him into motionless despair. Gladly, — almost fiercely would he dart through any passage-way that would lead him to safety. But no such way reveals itself to his straining eyes. His ear and mind labor to catch the meaning of the direction given him, but grasp it not; all hope dies in his breast, and he already feels his flesh palpitate and wither under the tongues of flame that are darting towards him. Of what avail has been the vague cry of safety from below? What relief is afforded to his last moments of agony by his own groaning exclamation, "I might have been saved"? — This is imagination, it may be said; but we would ask, Has it not a strict application to fact in the subject of which we treat?

We tremble to think how deadly an influence the mode of preaching of which we speak, must have upon common minds. How must they be tortured and broken and enslaved by it! What a surrender must they make of their freedom and birthright! How must they content themselves with a mere passive obedience, and admit the "right divine" of spiritual kings to reign over their consciences and lives! How must it tend to give them mean, abject, and disgusting views of

themselves! And doubtless one great object of such preaching is, that the creature may be covered with the dust of humiliation before the exalted majesty of the Creator. It is forgotten that there is a sense to the word *humiliation* which removes it the farthest possible from the true meaning of *humility*. We are told that we must glorify the holiness of God by our own contrasted guilt and shame. Of course, holding such views as we do, the first thought that would come into our mind in answer to this would be to ask, Is there this boundless separation between man and his Maker? Has the child been torn away from the arms of its Parent and hurried a measureless distance from his mercy? and must miracles bear the passive object of their power through that distance into those arms? Look at the doctrine in its naked and open character, and then ask if men speak of what is real, when they speak of this contrast of Infinite Holiness and entire Depravity. But letting this pass, we must express our deep surprise that any mortal imagination could have fancied that such a contrast glorifies the perfection of God. Do angels and arch-angels thus illustrate his glory? Do sun, moon, and stars tell of the adorable splendor and purity of his character by blackness and darkness? Do they speak of the eternal principles of his nature and of his dominion, by rushing with mad disorder, and in lawless courses, through the heavens, because there is space for irregularity? What is the glory which archangels pay to God? They glorify him in developing their own glorious capacities for excellence, and thus coming to a nearer imitation of and resemblance to Him. How do the heavens show forth his praise? By reflecting as a stainless mirror the bright image of his perfection. Alas! that man, of all things else, should think of glorifying God in the way of contrast. But it is said we benefit ourself by this prostration, and humiliation, and self-reproach. This idea carried to the extreme to which it is carried, unqualified and unrestrained by other principles, is untrue in theory. The course it would justify, has no *tendency* to our benefit. But what is the practical result? If we are unfit for good conduct, absolutely unable to do any thing well, how natural that we should make no effort after virtue. We undertake nothing to which we are in our own convictions entirely inadequate. All action presupposes motive, and motive implies an internal feel-

ing or opinion of our ability to reach the object. Thus these abject ideas of our own minds injure ourselves by preventing us from virtuous and noble effort, and also make us act to a far different end than that of glorifying our Creator. Not only does the argument fail in both of its points, but the examination of it leads us to conclusions directly contrary to those it would establish.

But we return to insist more directly on the idea that this shrouding religion in mystery and uncertainty is a dreadful wrong to the human soul. How fearfully must the mysterious mode of preaching injure hearts which are piously disposed, which have that overflow of love to God and love to man which is the fulfilment of the whole law. A pious man struggles to comprehend his duty as it is announced from the oracles of God, but it slips from his grasp. Again and again he endeavours to seize it, but meets with repeated delusion and ill success. Gladly would he fold the truth in his embrace, but he is condemned to disappointment;

——— "frustra comprensa manus effugit imago,
Par levibus ventis, volucrique simillima somno."

Christ came to bring life and immortality to *light*; — why will men cover his message with darkness and doubt? The condition to which we are brought by mysterious preaching is one of great suspense. Suspense is a source of misery in the most trivial affairs. This is a truth of which almost all who speak have spoken, and almost all who write have written. When there is a long balancing between good and evil fortune, the vexed mind is almost tempted to defy fortune to do her worst. Misery itself is preferable to a continual doubting whether misery or joy will be our portion. Now if this be the case in inferior matters, how much more strongly and decidedly will it be so in matters the most important. If the feelings are fretted when the scale hesitates between a moment's joy and a moment's sorrow, how shall we describe the state of the mind when the gloom of uncertainty is cast thickly over its whole condition and duty? If we should be more kind and compassionate than to torture a man with doubt about so small a thing as the arrival or departure of a friend, how can we have the heart to over-

whelm him with dark sayings and vague mysteries in announcing that message of duty, on his treatment of which hangs his everlasting happiness or woe? Yet dreadful as this course is, we fear it is sometimes pursued. We fear that the imagination of the preacher sometimes kindles the flames of hell about the trembling victim, and gives him but dubious directions how he may force his way through them. He describes the way of escape indeed, with great sollemnity, and the appearance of strong personal conviction; yet it is a dark way, — clouds are at its entrance and over its whole extent, — it is rough with precipices and torrents, — the surest foot is sure to stumble, — miracles must bear up him who does not fall to be dashed in pieces. How different from this the calm and clear language of Jesus Christ, when, from the mountain, he spoke to the multitudes who had assembled, expecting to hear the voice of a temporal conqueror ring in their ears. Strangely, in this particular, has the whole religion of Christ been mistaken by the lovers of mystery. That religion requires the direction of certain affections to definite objects, and the performance of definite duties. Mystery is something we must place *upon* the mind without receiving it *into* the mind, — something which we must regard without understanding, and obey without applying. It is something which rises up gradually and gloomily from the plain ground of religious faith, — which we must gaze at from a distance with indefinable feelings of awe, — but into which it were impious for any curious eye to search too closely. Nor let it be said that we describe, under the names religion and mystery, two things which are both parts, though somewhat dissimilar parts, of the Christian system. The truth is, they are not only dissimilar, but opposite in nature. Light and darkness are not more opposed to each other than a clear and an incomprehensible doctrine. Neither do we insist too strongly on the character of determinateness as belonging to Christianity. The Bible continually implies, on this point, the principle which is acknowledged and verified by reason. The spirit of preciseness marks its inculcations of doctrine and duty throughout. This truth is a glorious thing for human nature and human character, and it is wonderful it has not been more clearly seen and thoroughly practised on, blazing as it does

like fire on every page of Holy Writ. And when we say that the Scriptures, in describing man's duty, speak in terms the plainest and most precise, we do not of course mean to say that they are continually marking out the external courses of a religious life. These, in order to express the same spirit, must be constantly changing with the changing state of society and of the human mind.

It is the *principles* of duty that stand out on the pure pages of the Holy Book clear, distinct, and bright as the stars in heaven. Let the eye be fixed upon them, and, with all the fearlessness of faith and hope and love, we may hold on safely and surely in that path we must make for ourselves over the troubled yet trackless waters of human life. We shall be surrounded with mysteries, yet the brilliant light that streams from Heaven will give us no dark decisions as to the direction that will lead us to the celestial region.

It must be seen, that what we have objected to in these remarks is not the acknowledgment of mysteries as existing in the world and in the soul. Such mysteries, through the necessity of the whole constitution of the universe, must exist. We rejoice that they do exist. We rejoice that the voice of God's providence in the world is continually speaking to us, as the voice of his grace has spoken to us in the Holy Word; — "Behold I *show* you a mystery." If the mind be faithful to its powers, if the *heart* be faithful to *its* powers, we shall in this life be continually changing mystery into knowledge; and, when this life shall end, we shall "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" in having revealed to us, and in revealing to ourselves, those mysteries which will be perpetually unfolded as we live on in that endless life of God in which we find the redemption and regeneration of our souls. — We have not objected to the conduct of those who teach the existence of mysteries, but to that of those who perplex and blind the simple honesty and clearness of the human will by mingling dark enigmas with the most important questions of duty, who create a warfare between faith and conscience, who refuse the most lawful claims of the understanding and withold the most solemn rights of the heart, and who press back the most holy principles in the soul when they are just struggling into religious life, by annexing to the enjoyment of that life unknown and perhaps undiscoverable and impossible conditions.

Our limits do not allow the insertion of some remarks we had intended to offer, designed to describe more distinctly the manner in which mysteries affect, first, the intellect, and, secondly, the heart. These remarks may or may not appear at some future time.

ART. VI. — *A Letter to the Executive Committee of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches, respecting their Organization for the Support of the Ministry at Large in Boston;* by JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.

TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.*

GENTLEMEN,

A fraternity of churches having been formed for the permanent establishment of a ministry at large in our city, and Messrs. Barnard and Gray, with myself, having been elected to this service, under the organization which has been committed to you; it has been thought proper by my colleagues and myself that we should present to you, and through you to the religious societies which you represent, an exposition of our views of this ministry, in its claims, and in the measures which have been taken to sustain it, and to make it more effectual. It is highly important that both you, and we, should have clear and just conceptions upon these subjects. There is a demand for this ministry, or there is not. And the plan adopted for its support is a wise and Christian one,

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* An association, called "The Benevolent Fraternity of Churches," has been formed within the Unitarian Congregations in Boston, for the support of the ministry at large, which has for some years been in operation here. In organizing this association, the independence of our several churches has been scrupulously regarded. Five delegates from each of these congregations, or from each of the Benevolent Societies within these congregations, are the channel of communication between these congregations and the ministry at large. There is also an Executive Committee of five gentlemen, whose duty it is to devise, mature, and execute measures, by which the object of the Fraternity may be advanced. It is to this Committee that the following Letter is addressed.

or it is not. Each of the queries, thus implied, has indeed received from you a most unequivocal answer. An association has been formed within our religious societies for sustaining this ministry, because they believe the ministry is required by the moral wants of the community; and because they feel that those, "who, through the providence of God are possessors of blessings, to which others around them are strangers, have, in these blessings, a weighty responsibleness, and would discharge the trust." * Have you, then, or have we, fallen into any mistake upon either of these subjects? In resuming my service, after an absence of more than a year from it, and from our city, and after six years and a half passed in its active duties, I would bring home to my own mind the inquiries I have proposed, and, in as brief a space as I may, would answer them.

Is there, then, or is there not, a call for a ministry at large in our city? Allow me to recur to the circumstances, which led to the first proposition of this ministry.

I entered upon the duties of "the mission to the poor," as I called my service in my first Quarterly Report, on the 5th of November, 1826. There was, at that time, a young man in the field, in the employment of "The Boston Society for the Moral and Religious Instruction of the Poor." I had then but very little knowledge of this department of society in our city, and had to seek and obtain this knowledge as I could. My first object, however, was, to connect myself with such families, as I should find were not visited by any settled minister as a part of his flock; and to render them any, and every service, which could be looked for from a Christian pastor and friend. At the end of my first Quarter, on the 5th of February, 1827, I had fifty families in my pastoral charge. At the end of the next three months, I had ninety families; and at the close of the first year, I was the pastor of a hundred and seventy families. In that year I published four Quarterly Reports, in which, according to the light I had obtained, I brought before our public those interests of this ministry, with which I was at that time most strongly affected. My visits, during that year, had been frequent, — generally once a week, — at the House of Cor-

* Report on a Union of the Churches for Benevolent Purposes, p. 7.

rection, where I had been enabled to learn something of the causes and character of crime; and I had visited the families of a number of the inmates of that institution. I had also learned something of the number and character of the children, who should either have been in our schools, or in some useful employment; but who were misspending their time, and vitiating themselves in our streets, and lanes, and markets; on our wharves, and in the open spaces of the city. It early, therefore, became an object of my especial care, to aid parents in keeping their children at school; and, as far as I might, to rescue children from vagrancy and crime. And not only was I daily a preacher from house to house, to those to whom access could not otherwise have been obtained for Christian instruction; but, within five weeks of the time of my entrance upon this service, with the assistance of an association of young men, I obtained the upper chamber of the circular building at the bottom of Portland Street, for Sunday evening exercises, which were attended by considerable numbers of those whom I visited. My sentiments, however, were yet very vague upon many of the great interests which are to be regarded in view of the administration of Christianity in large and densely populated cities. I had learned, indeed, that there is much in the science of government, which is not to be reached by civil legislation, or to be looked for from civil authority; much, the obligation of which devolves upon the intelligent, the philanthropic, the religious, and moral part of the community; much evil to be prevented, and much good to be attained, on which Christian principles, brought wisely to bear, may exert an influence to be exerted by no other means. I felt, therefore, that Christian ministers, connected with society, and employed as I was, could do much in collecting facts, by which we might be most surely guided to the principles and modes of operation, by which cities may be most effectually secured against the moral evils to which they are most exposed. An extract from my first semi-annual Report of the second year, published in May, 1828, will give the views I then had of the demands of this ministry, and of the manner in which I then proposed that we should meet them.

"I have often been asked, what I suppose to be the number of families in the city which are without a pastor. Within the past eighteen months, I have indeed been con-

nected with only about two hundred and fifty such families. But there is not a lane, nor is there hardly a single yard, which I have explored thoroughly. Boston, however, contains at least sixty-five thousand inhabitants. Suppose the average number in the families of the city to be five, and there will be thirteen thousand families. There are also, I think, forty-four places of worship. Giving two hundred families to each of these places of worship, — which will be as many as can be claimed for them, — there will be eight thousand and eight hundred families, which are connected with our religious societies ; and four thousand two hundred which will be left without a ministry. But suppose that there are only three thousand families, or fifteen thousand individuals in our city, who, by various circumstances are shut out from the influences of our religious institutions. I would ask, Should they not be provided with a ministry, by which the blessings of our religion, as far as shall be practicable, may be extended to them ? I feel strongly, and I have much to say, upon this subject. But I will confine myself within as narrow limits as I can, in the hope that I may thus obtain attention to it. Let the interests and the claims of this ministry be understood, and I think that they cannot be disregarded.

"I am inclined to believe that there is not a city in Christendom, in which the public institutions of our religion are more generally regarded, or in which their salutary influence is more widely felt, than in Boston. But it is incidental to the very nature of a city, that it should collect within itself very great numbers of those, who are dependent for their daily bread upon their daily labor. The demand for laborers in a city, considered, as it will always be, in connexion with the facilities which a city affords for association with many of the same class, and with the hope, often a very delusive one, of opportunities of more constant employment, and of better wages, than can be obtained in the country, will secure a supply far beyond what will be required, in all the departments of the service for which laborers are wanted. Some, also, will be brought into the city by the hope of living in it in unchecked idleness and beggary ; and some, that they may here more securely indulge in vice, and support themselves in crime. From these, and other causes, there always has been, and there will be, a

very large number in cities who are very poor; who will feel, as it is not felt, because it is not so manifest, in the country, how wide is the distinction of their condition from that of the rich; and who either *cannot*, from feebleness, or sickness, or the want of suitable apparel, unite with us in worship in our churches; or from pride, or the influence of passions and habits not more commendable, *will not* join with us in our public religious exercises. The question, then, arises, and it is a very solemn one, What are our duties in regard to the moral, the spiritual wants, of this very large class of our fellow beings around us? If we have the means, to a very great extent at least, of meeting and supplying these wants, of rescuing many, who are very near to us, on our right hand and on our left, from the degradation, and misery, and ruin of sin; of sending to very many, who otherwise will not have them, the regenerating instructions and excitements, the supports and consolations of our religion; I would ask, Is our worship, or are our offerings to God in our churches what they should be, while we are blessing him for that dispensation of his grace and truth which he has given us by his Son, which, however, we are ourselves withholding from multitudes, who can receive them only through our Christian sympathy and benevolence? To my mind, it is as plainly the will of God, that there should be a permanent ministry for the poor of cities, — a distinct ministry for the special purpose of the poor, — as it is that we, who are not poor, should meet together to worship him. This is the sentiment which I now wish to bring before the opulent, the pious, and the charitable of our city. *There must be a ministry at large for the poor of cities; and the number to be employed in this ministry must be determined by the numbers in a city, which cannot be brought under the pastoral charges of the ministers of its churches.*"

It will be observed, that I have spoken of this service as *a ministry at large*. Let me say, that it was not affectation of peculiarity and distinction, which led me to this designation of it. I was led to it by the thought, and the feeling, that a ministry was wanted here, and in every large city in Christendom, for great and important services, which are not among the recognised objects of the ministry in our churches. Does any one ask, What are these services? I might answer, generally, that they comprehend all the offices which a de-

vout and devoted ministry, having distinctly in view all the objects of Christianity, and supremely desirous to do what it may for each of these objects, can extend to those in a city, *who are in regular connexion with no Church, and are known to no minister as members of his congregation.* Now I take the ground, which I suppose that no one will dispute, that of this number are at least one quarter part of the inhabitants of our city. All of these are not indeed poor. Nor will all, — for some are avowed infidels, — accept the offices of the Christian ministry for themselves, or their families. But a large proportion of them *are* poor. And another considerable proportion, though not receivers of alms, do but live by their industry; and, feeling at once that they cannot dress for Church as others dress for it, or pay for seats which they would not occupy without paying for them, are as effectually separated from our congregations, as they would be even by a law which should interdict their admission to them. Now it is a well ascertained fact, that many hundreds of families in our city, which belong to no congregation, and are known to no minister as a part of his flock, will very gratefully receive the visits of a minister who will seek them out, and connect himself with them as their Christian friend and pastor. Many of these families, through the extension to them of a Christian sympathy and interest, may be brought into one and another of our congregations and churches. Constituted, however, as our congregations now are, many, very many, cannot be brought into them. Is it asked, Why? I answer by inquiring, Are the members of these congregations ready to open their pews to all, of every condition, whom we might bring into our churches to join with them in worship? It may be said, that there is a reservation of free seats in many, and in most, of these churches. And where are these free seats? And for whom? Are they free seats for those, with whom we would worship one common Father as equally his children, however unequal in the circumstances of our outward conditions; with whom we would worship as brethren; as our fellow sinners, and fellow immortals; and as fellow expectants of a judgment to come, at which every one is to receive, not according to his attainments in knowledge, in wealth, or in reputation, — but, according to what he has done in the body, whether it have been good, or whether it

have been evil? The truth is, and it is not to be disguised, that, constituted as society now is, not only with us, but in every city in Christendom, ay, and not only out of the Church, but in it, the poor *are*, — and if we would understand either our duties, or interests in regard to them, we must realize that they are, — a class by themselves. The appropriate question on this subject is, How became they so? Were they made so, or were they first known as such, by the proposition of a specific ministry for them? Or, could it be supposed by any one, that, by the proposition of this ministry, it was intended to keep them a separate class; to erect chapels for them as a separate class; and then to employ that very religion, whose object it is to make us all "one in Christ Jesus," as an instrument for effecting more completely a separation of the rich and poor? I, certainly, have never so viewed my ministry. But I have viewed and exercised it, as an important instrument for effecting a higher and more Christian union of the classes of the rich and the poor. I appeal to my Reports upon the question, whether this has not been with me a leading object. It has, indeed, been the means to which I have looked for far the greatest amount of good to be attained by this service. — But here I would speak only of the *claims* of this ministry; and I rest its claims upon the number among us, not connected with our congregations; on the fact, that it has been found practicable to establish a pastoral connexion with those, who would otherwise have had no Christian pastor; on the design of our Lord, that, through his religion the poor should be blessed, as they cannot otherwise be blessed; and on his design, not less obvious, or less imperative upon us, that to the poor, and to all the poor, the Gospel should be preached. On these grounds I have proposed a ministry distinct from that of our churches; *a ministry at large;* a ministry whose object it shall be to seek out those, who, to be *found*, must be *sought;* and by all the means which our religion prescribes, and which an enlightened experience shall suggest, to endeavour to accomplish in regard to them the whole purposes of the Gospel. Let there be an administration of Christianity among us, by which, independent of such a ministry, the Gospel shall be preached to the poor, and to all the poor among us, and no one will more rejoice than I shall, when the necessity of a ministry at large shall be entirely superseded.

I have used also the expressions, "a permanent ministry for the poor;" "a permanent ministry for the special service of the poor." And I am free to say, that, were I now, with all the lights I have to guide me in this interest, for the first time bringing before you the proposition of a ministry at large for cities, I should not employ precisely these expressions. It may indeed be asked, "Is it not a ministry which is specially for the poor?" And without hesitation, I answer, It is. "Why then," it may be asked, "is it not so to be designated?" I answer, first, because, though specially, it is not exclusively for the poor. It is for all who are not within our congregations, and who will accept its services. Secondly, because I would not unnecessarily use terms, in defining the objects of this ministry, which I have found to be liable to abuse. I have said, that the poor *are* a class by themselves. It is the direct tendency of the whole machinery of society, not in Europe only, but throughout our country, (except as far as Christianity has interposed its spirit and influence,) to widen and deepen the lines of demarkation between the more and less favored in regard to intellect, to property, and to all the circumstances which give distinction and power among men. We are already experiencing, and bitterly too, many of the consequences of this unchristian constitution of society; and I would that we might be aware of these consequences, before it shall be too late effectually to check, or to remedy them. I regard the ministry I have proposed as an important instrument and means to this end. Yet all its objects may be sought, without thus making out the poor as its peculiar subjects. — Nor is this all. The proclamation of "a special ministry for the poor" is suited to awaken, and without doubt has awakened, the feeling, that its great design is not less to meet their temporal, than their spiritual wants. I have always been aware of this difficulty, and have wished to do what I might to obviate it. I have thought, and felt, and in my Reports have said, that, if the service should be committed to injudicious men, it might be an instrument even for the extension of pauperism and vice. But I have known, too, that it may be made the greatest blessing which can in this world be extended to many among the poor, and to some who are not poor; and that infinitely the greatest blessings within its scope are those which the wealth of the world alone could not purchase. For these

reasons I should wish to express the service by very general terms; and such are the terms by which I have designated it. — This explanation seems to be required at this stage of our progress, and I am glad of an opportunity to make it.

I have not, it may be thought, been sufficiently explicit in regard to our modes of operation in this service. This is a topic on which I might indulge in very extensive detail. But it will be enough to say, that our plan comprehends, first, the most extensive acquaintance which we can form with those, who are the proper subjects of our ministry; and the most faithful service, which, as Christian teachers, we can render to them, at once in their habitations, and whenever, and wherever we may meet them. To the best of our ability, we would bring home the interests and objects of Christianity to every individual with whom we may connect ourselves in our office; in every case regarding every circumstance, by which the ends of the ministry are to be attained. — Secondly. A specific object of peculiar attention is, the recovery of the morally exposed children around us. The immediate ends to be sought in regard to them are indeed very different, and as different are to be the means to be employed to save them. Some are to be kept at home, and some are to be removed from home. Some require only to be placed at useful service, and others must be brought under a corrective discipline before they will be qualified for such service. — Thirdly. We hold ourselves in readiness for every application which may be made to us for such counsel and aid as we may give in all the exigencies, in which the counsel and aid of a Christian friend are wanting; and in which, without this ministry, many a sufferer would not know where to look with confidence for them. I have met with no incidents in my life, and I have read of none, more affecting, or higher in their claims for sympathy, than have been some of the applications of this description, which have been made to me in my office as a minister at large. I refer here particularly to the applications of mothers, for aid in the rescue of their children, and especially their daughters, from ruin. I can conceive of no higher or holier service that can be rendered, than this. — And, on Sundays, my colleagues are preachers to children, — the children of large Sunday schools; and, I am happy to say, are, I think, remarkably successful in this exercise. They are making

the great experiment of the practicability of exciting in the minds of children *an interest in religion;* of giving them a kind of instruction respecting religion, and respecting the Bible, in its history, the characters it gives of good and of bad men, its geography, and all the objects of which it treats, by which the young curiosity may be excited and gratified. And, during a large part of the year, they preach on Sunday evenings to those who may be disposed to meet with them for worship. — It certainly is not one of our objects to form distinct churches for the poor. On the contrary, we should each of us rejoice to see all whom we visit, in one or another of our churches. But of these I have specified, and of any other means which you, or any of our friends shall propose, or which may be suggested by our own experience, by which we may accomplish the objects of our service, we shall gladly avail ourselves, as long as we shall find a field for our services, in which we may labor for the cause of the Gospel, and the best good of our fellow men, without trenching upon the lines, or taking upon ourselves the duties, of others.

I have said that our ministry has awakened the feeling, that it is designed not less to meet the temporal, than the spiritual wants of the poor. And, in truth, I have done much for the temporal necessities of those, whom I have visited in this connexion. Yet no one, I think, can be more alive than I am, to the evil tendencies of any known organization for the relief of those wants, of which it is the will of God that every individual, as far as possible, should obtain relief by his own exertions. I well know, that the *necessity* for shelter, and clothing, and food, is the call of Providence to labor for them; and that the supply of them by charity, where they might be obtained by the personal exertions of those who need them, is a ministry of virtue to vice. It is not a mere substitute of charity for the necessity of labor. It is an employment of charity for a direct violation of God's will; for the encouragement and support of reckless idleness. I have no more right to give to him who might, if he would, supply his wants by his own industry, but who chooses to live upon the industry of others, than I have a right to withhold that which he needs, from him who cannot obtain it, unless I shall impart it to him. Yet there are cases, which come under our ministry, and not a few, in which the demand for charity, in its highest sense, is impe-

rious; and we have no right, even if we had the will, to disregard them. Here, then, — I speak in reference to the cases at large in which applications are made to us for charity, or alms, — is often the most difficult and painful part of our service. Till recently, our custom has been, each to give, or to withhold, according to our individual judgments of cases, as they have occurred. We have been almoners of our friends, as well as the spiritual pastors of those whom we have visited. In this department, however, we propose a very important change, and from this change we anticipate very important consequences.

We wish to visit, and to serve in our office, as exclusively as we may, as the spiritual and religious friends of those with whom we shall be connected in it. We do not wish, — to use the language of the Report on a union of the Churches for the support of this ministry, — "to add another to the eleemosynary institutions of the city." Still, as we must see want in all the manifestations which can be made of it among the poor; as we are very desirous that want should be met and answered by charity, when we shall think that Christianity demands that it should be so met and answered; and, as we have benevolent associations for almost every description of want, to which we can refer the suffering subjects of our ministry, or to which we can ourselves appeal for them, in the various cases in which we shall think that relief should be given; we have determined, as *a leading general rule*, that, as far as alms-giving is concerned, we will aid those whom we shall be called thus to serve, rather by pointing out to them the means of relief, than by giving relief ourselves. It cannot, I think, be suspected, that our object in this mode of operation is any immediate relief which will thus be brought to ourselves. On the contrary, the immediate inconveniences of the plan to us, and the difficulties we shall have to overcome in it, as far as our personal feelings and exertions are concerned, are very great. It will at once, we think, be obvious, how much easier it would be, and, as a matter of mere feeling, how much more agreeable, personally to give relief, where we think it may be required, and where the individuals to be relieved are immediately before us, and are seeking from us the aid they need, than to send them to others, or ourselves to go to others for them. But we are taking measures, by which we

hope at once to aid our Benevolent Associations in meeting more completely their benevolent objects, and at the same time to do something, and all that we can, for the prevention of imposture, and the suppression of mendicity. We have therefore opened a central office, in which each of us, in turn, will pass a part of every day, except Sundays; and we propose to have tickets, — or rather, we have them, and they were used by my colleagues during the last winter, — which, obtained by our friends, and given instead of money, or other things applied for by those who beg from house to house, or in the streets, will refer these applicants for charity to our office, and thus give us the opportunity of looking into their necessities and claims. We are also obtaining information, from all our Benevolent Societies, of their specific objects; of their modes of operation; and of the name, residence, and character, of every individual relieved by them. And, by means of free and ample communications with delegates from each of these societies, we are endeavouring, with them, to settle the principles and the practice, by which each shall be made acquainted with the objects and operations of the others, and of the individuals relieved by each and all; by which each shall thus be saved from interference with any other, and equally saved, as far as may be, from ministering to the extension of pauperism and vice. We may thus at once coöperate with these societies, in the objects of their highest interest; and, we think, may greatly aid them in securing the efficiency of their benevolent efforts. We may thus interpose a strong check upon the demands of idleness and vice, and do something to excite and improve a sense of the importance of industry, of providence, and a sense of character. And, while our own connexion, as spiritual pastors, shall be as widely extended as it may be among all of every description in our department, and while we may be indirectly acting for the incidental, but very important objects, to which we have referred, we may ourselves be more exclusively regarded, and may more effectively act, as Christian ministers. I must be allowed to add in this connexion, that there will, and must be, exceptions to the general rule I have stated. There are cases of claims to charity, which I would not unnecessarily turn over to any association, or to an Overseer of the Poor, as such. To meet these cases, I shall continue

to look to the kindness of my friends, which I am quite confident will not be withdrawn. The proposed change, however, I consider as an important stage in the progress of our ministry; and the credit of it is principally due to my young colleagues. We are not yet fully prepared for this new mode of action. But we doubt not, that, when our plans in regard to it shall be completed, ministers at large, of other denominations of Christians, will heartily unite in them.

Of the organization which has been adopted to give permanency, and an increased efficiency, to this ministry, I have no terms for an adequate expression of my feelings. More than six years ago, in one of my Reports, I expressed my strong desire, that this ministry should be connected with our churches, or with the benevolent societies in these churches. I am devoutly grateful that this desire is at length realized. The fact is, that, while my interest in this service has been the strongest which I could feel, out of the circle of my family, in any human interest, because I have believed that there is no other conceivable way, than by a more extended administration of Christianity, by which the highest objects of our religion, in regard to multitudes around us, are to be attained; I have yet as strongly felt, that the greatest efficiency of this ministry is to be looked for, not so much in my personal connexion with the subjects of it, dear and important as this has been to me, as in the closer and more Christian connexion, to which it might be subservient, of the classes which are separated by those very distinctions, by which our religion would bind them to each other. Christianity contemplates, — and it is one of its greatest glories that it contemplates, — a universal interest of man in man. It inculcates universal brotherhood; and it even makes this spirit of brotherhood a test of discipleship. It recognises the distinctions of ruler and subject, of learned and unlearned, of rich and poor, of master and servant. But it also recognises in the servant, equally as in the master, in the poorest as in the richest, in the most ignorant as in the best informed, and in the most powerless as in him who is invested with the highest authority, an immortal nature; the capacities of an eternally growing virtue; and a nature intended, through that virtue, for an eternally advancing happiness. It addresses every individual as a child of God;

requires that each shall think of himself, and of his fellow beings, as children of God; and teaches every one to look up to God, alike as his own Father, and the Father of each one of his race. And to secure these great, these paramount objects, it brings before us every circumstance upon which we might be disposed to congratulate ourselves, in regard either to our natural endowments, to our acquisitions, or to any possessions which distinguish us from, or raise us above others, as *a responsibility*. In this view of the spirit and purposes of Christianity, I have felt, that, important as is its administration in our churches, and important as are the services of its ministers in their congregations, there is still far more to be done, than has yet been extensively understood, or seriously aimed at, in the administration of our religion. I mean that there are departments in its administration, — means of extending its spirit and power, and of obtaining the great results it contemplates, — which, according to their means and opportunities, devolve on *all its believers*. Churches, or Christian societies, as such, have great responsibilities beyond themselves; and every individual, in every church, who joins in the prayer, "May thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven," to live consistently with his prayer, should be alive to the obligation to do what he may, for the extension of the cause and kingdom of God and of Christ. To this sentiment you have given a most distinct expression, in that organization which has been formed in our congregations, for the widest diffusion which may be effected of the blessings of our religion among us; and it is my hearty prayer, and most joyfully will my colleagues and myself coöperate with you, that this great object may as completely as possible be attained in our city.

I know not how the Association which has been formed for the support of the ministry at large may generally be regarded by others. But I do not hesitate to say, that, if it have been formed, as I trust that it has been, and as I know to some extent that it has been, under the excitement of a strong Christian sympathy of the more with the less favored portions of our community; under a feeling of the responsibleness of Christians for their Christian privileges; and with a view to the wisest direction which may be given to individual and associated efforts, for the greatest good of

those around us; — I should then look to this organization as the commencement of a new era in the administration of our religion. And, in truth, if it is not to conduce to these ends, I should have little pleasure in the thought of it. The great want in our society is not, and for a long time has not been, that of a disposition to provide alms for the poor, or religious instruction for those who need, and are willing to receive it. It is no indulgence of vanity to say, that, in these respects, we are at least behind no other city of equal population. But Christianity looks to far more important agencies, than those either of associated, or of deputed sympathy and interest. It addresses itself to every individual, and it calls every individual to the offices which he can perform in its cause. This seems to me to be one of its greatest objects, and one of the objects which have been most overlooked by Christians. It has indeed instituted, and it requires, a special ministry. No religion can be sustained without such a ministry. But while all the objects of other religions may be met by such a ministry, it is not so with the objects of Christianity. The great end of our religion is, not only to secure the instruction of the ignorant, and the most ignorant, and to raise the low and degraded, and even the lowest and most degraded. It is, to secure the instruction and salvation of *each* and *every one*, whatever may be his condition and his character. It even claims an interest in every one, and efforts for every one, proportioned to his exposures, or to his actual lowness and degradation; proportioned not only to his inability, but to his perversity; proportioned to his moral necessities in order to his salvation, whatever those necessities may be, and to whatever causes they may be attributed. And how are these claims to be met and answered? By the ministry in our churches? It may do, and it actually does, much for them. By an additional and special ministry for those not comprehended in these churches? It has been an instrument of great good, and I hope will be an instrument of still greater good. But, if it is to be made a substitute, on the part of those who shall support it, for personal interest in those who are, or should be, the subjects of it, — a substitute for personal connexion with them, and personal exertions for their greater good and happiness, — I can only say, that it will then certainly conduce to comparatively little benefit; and that even

the most liberal support that can be given it, will not, I believe, be accepted at the bar of God, as a substitute for one office, to which the Gospel calls man for his fellow-man. But if, on the other hand, the ministry at large shall be viewed, as I think it ought to be viewed, as a recognition on the part of our churches of the principles, that blessings are responsibilities; that Christianity is the greatest of blessings, and therefore brings upon its receivers the highest and greatest of responsibilities; that, if the poor are to be blessed through the Gospel, it must be by its influence on the hearts and characters of those who believe, and have the means of imparting the Gospel; and that the most efficient support to be given to the ministry, either in our churches, or at large, is, as circumstances may require, either a hearty coöperation with ministers, or an individual Christian service, wherever, and to whomsoever it may be rendered; — then, I believe, we may look for influences of our religion, such as it has yet very partially exerted upon society. There is no moral good within the purposes of the Gospel of Christ, there is no Christian object in regard to human society, which is not attainable by the means by which Christianity proposes its attainment. This is a great truth, to which I should be glad to give the greatest possible prominence. But these means comprehend, not only a special ministry, but the personal interest in them, and the personal efforts for them, of every receiver of the Gospel. Its instituted ministry is a special agency for this cause. But this agency, though special, not only is not exclusive; but, unaided by each and all, according to their means and opportunities, it will be, as it has been, comparatively inoperative. The question may arise, How are the churches to coöperate in this service? As briefly as I may I will state my sentiments upon this subject.

There are specific duties which belong to the office of a minister at large. He is, as he shall obtain opportunity, to preach the gospel from house to house. He is to connect himself with as many as he may, as a Christian pastor and friend, with a view to all the services, which, as a Christian pastor and friend, he can extend to them. He is, in the circle in which he visits, and the field in which he labors, to endeavour to accomplish all the objects of the Gospel. And, *he is to give himself wholly to these things.* This, the private Christian cannot do. Yet, in these offices,

one private Christian can do more, because he has more ability and more leisure, than another. Nor is there any private Christian, who, if he have the disposition, will not have also the opportunity, and the means, of many, — it may be very unostentatious, but still very important, — Christian services for others. To the question, then, How may the churches coöperate with the ministry at large in its objects? I would answer, Let there be as little machinery, and concert of plan in this work, as may be. I would even say, Let the means, and the modes of operation, be left to every individual. But, let every individual feel, that he has to do in it what he may for a great common cause, which has paramount claims upon him. He has to do what he may for the cause of a Christian connexion between the classes of society; what he may in the cause of Christian sympathy of man with man; what he may to aid those, who, without his aid, may sink under the temptations and trials of their condition. He is to look upon every man, in every condition, as his brother. The poorest, the lowest, the most degraded is the brother, and the fellow immortal, of the richest, the most intellectual, the most cultivated, the most virtuous. Man, therefore, is universally to feel, and to cherish, respect for man. In his own difficulties and defects, his own wants and dependence, he is to feel the trials, and needs, and claims of others. And, in reference to the claims, and needs, and trials of others, he is, as he has means and opportunities, to carry out the spirit of the Gospel towards and concerning them. I might easily fill pages in defining offices of Christian respect, interest, kindness, the opportunities for which are every day occurring to every individual. I will, however, only refer you to some of the circumstances, which may be regarded as calls for your sympathy and kindness; and with every individual I will leave the question, in what cases, and to what extent, he can answer them.

In the first place, I would call your attention to the fact which I have stated, of the great numbers around us who are not connected with any of our religious congregations. Do you ask, or do any ask, What have we to do in regard to this circumstance, any further than, as far as we may, to provide for them a ministry? I answer, that I think there is much, and of a very interesting character, and which may

be conducive to as much good to yourselves, as to those to whom you may extend your kindness in the service. I shall speak very freely upon this, and upon each of the topics, to which, in this connexion, I would ask your attention.

Of those who have no connexion with any of our congregations, I have said that some are infidels. Yet among those whom I have visited in my ministry, there have been very few who have not either believed in revelation, or feared that there might be truth in the Gospel. The multitude in the poorer, as well as in the richer classes, deficient as they may be in the principles and spirit of our religion, yet do not directly disbelieve, or explicitly discard it. And far the greater number are at least as hearty believers, and are as truly resting their eternal hopes upon Christianity, as the majority of worshippers in our churches. Why, then, it may be asked, are they not *in* our churches? I have said, that one class is excluded by their inability, real or imaginary, to pay for seats in them; and by their feelings in regard to such free seats, as are provided for those who are neither proprietors, nor renters, in our houses of worship. Another class cannot, or thinks that it cannot, provide suitable apparel for our Sunday assemblies. Another class, consisting of those who come from the country, and some of whom may belong to each of the denominations of Christians among us, are kept at home on Sundays, at first by the embarrassment felt in the thought of going to a place of worship in which all around them are strangers, and in which they know of no provision for them; and by the habit soon induced of continuing to remain at home, or of not going to church, only because, for a considerable time, they have not been there. Many mothers are kept at home, because they cannot leave their young children; and many husbands and fathers stay at home, because, should they go to church, they cannot take their wives and children with them. A large number, indeed, could go, but from one or more of these causes; and others, not unbelievers, are indisposed to go, because their tastes,and associations, and interests are of any and every character but that of religion and virtue. Now in view of these classes and circumstances, are there no indications of opportunities, of which many might avail themselves for Christian usefulness?

To me it seems very desirable, that the greatest possible number in every town and city should be members of one or another of the religious societies in them. It will require no long acquaintance with families, which are without the pale of these institutions, to learn that there is a very great difference in their conditions, in many and important respects, and those of the families, the members of which are every Sunday gathered in one of our congregations. To those who have no such connexion, Sunday may often be anticipated as a day of rest, and found actually to be a day of greater restlessness and trouble than any of the week. There is very often, I believe, a vague feeling, that the day is not passed as it should be, when it is passed without any religious observances, while yet there is not disposition enough, or energy enough, for that self-employment for religious instruction, by which either the monotony of the day so spent may be relieved, or security obtained against all the exposures of listless idleness. It is, therefore, generally a fact, to which there are not very many exceptions, that there is in these families neither the order, nor the thrift, nor the neatness, nor the feeling of connexion with society, nor the personal or domestic comfort, nor the desires or efforts for character and virtue, which are generally to be found in families, which look to some church as their church, where they are accustomed to go for worship; and to some minister as their pastor, in intercourse with whom they find religious instruction, excitement, support, and consolation. Now is there nothing that may be done by the members of our congregations, in aiding those, who have no connexion with any congregation, in forming this connexion? I have said that I would leave every one free to choose his own department, in which to act for the aid of others, and his own modes of operation. But I here propose a field for service, in which there is much to be done. Let me observe, in regard to myself, that when I find individuals, or families, of the classes to which I have referred, preferring the ministrations in a Methodist, or Baptist, or Episcopal church, or in the church of a Calvinistic or Unitarian Congregationalist, it is my practice to do what I may to persuade them to become members of either of these ecclesiastical bodies. The fact is, that men have, or at least think they have, the distinctive faith of each of these churches, and yet are not

Christians; nor is it the distinctive faith of either that can alone make a Christian. Yet one may be aided, or may feel assured that he will be aided, far more effectually under one of these forms of our religion, than under another. I am myself strongly sensible to this preference, and hold nothing on earth comparatively so dear, as is Christianity in the form and spirit in which I receive it. And, defective as I am in its spirit, I feel quite sure that I should not obtain more of it, by exchanging my form of faith, and with it, as I then must, some of my most precious associations in worship, for a very different creed, and as different associations in the worship of God. I would, therefore, leave every one as free as I would be left by him, in the settlement of a creed, and the choice of a church. There are, I repeat, men who think themselves Christians, under every form which Christian faith has assumed, who yet are thought to be Christians by no other than themselves. And I am happy to believe also, that the spirit of Christ is the life of the soul in many, under each of these forms. Now it is this spirit of Christ in the disciple, — it is Christian principle, reigning in the heart, and bringing every thought and desire into subjection to the Gospel, — it is true, thorough-going repentance towards God, and constant endeavours for assimilation to God, by a more and more complete conformity to his will; this it is, and not a conformity to the distinctive peculiarities of a sect, which makes, and can alone make, a Christian. So I think, and therefore so I act in this department. Let others follow the guidance of their consciences in it. But to conscience I appeal, and to the consciences of those who acknowledge, that in their Christian privileges they have great responsibilities, whether, among these responsibilities, it be not one, that they should do what they can to extend these privileges to all around them.

But, secondly, many may be desirous to be useful to the poor around them, who would yet feel no disposition to this kind of usefulness. I would then say to such an one, here is a class of virtuous widows who have children. These mothers, with extreme difficulty, obtain the means of feeding and clothing their children. Some of them, however, while in health, ask for very little or even for no pecuniary aid. They want nothing on earth so much, as the aid which can be given them in keeping their children in school, in keep-

ing them from the contamination of the streets, and in making them obedient to maternal authority. A better charity is not to be exercised, than that of meeting the wants of these mothers, and of aiding them in the moral education of their children. — Again. There are families, many families, which are principally, or at least to a great extent, supported by charity, in which, if the heads of them were temperate and provident, there is entire ability for self-support. It is not difficult to form a connexion with such families. And would not a Christian feel that he had obtained for himself, as well as imparted a great good, by bringing one, or two, or three such families to cleanliness and order, to temperance and providence, to industry and independence? — Again. There are families beginning life, which, by some difficulties, — embarrassments into which they soon fall, and which might easily, in an early stage of them, have been prevented, or remedied, by the counsel of some one wiser than themselves, are yet, by the want of this counsel, brought first to intemperance, and then to poverty. — Again. There are poor families in which a husband, or wife, is sinking to the grave under lingering disease; and, during a long protracted sickness, the resources of their former industry have failed them, and they are exposed to the keenest sufferings. They may have been virtuous, or vicious. But, whatever has been their character, their condition is now a deplorable one. And does it not call for sympathy? Or, in the families of the virtuous, and the vicious, there may be a long continued illness among the children. Or, there are husbands, and wives, and widows, who, without any distinct form of disease, are yet very feeble, and great sufferers, and are capable of but very little service. Need I say what interesting and very useful services may be rendered to them by a Christian friend? There are families, to which no form of charity could be so great a boon, as that of a direction of their industry to some useful employment; and there are some, accustomed to depend on alms-giving, who are not to be excited to any means of self-support, and should therefore be compelled to that to which they cannot be persuaded. And, in a very large part of all these families there are children, who, if left wholly to the interest and care of their parents and immediate friends, will be the victims of vice, and will be lost. The moral exposures of these children, and the

early depravity of very large numbers of them, should be felt to be one of the highest moral interests of our community. A few of them are transferred to the boys' or girls' Asylum. But, if we would save those of them whom we may, there is very much more to be done for them. I have known an extent of corruption among very young children in our city, which could hardly be heard but with a feeling of horror. And there is now, and continually, a great extent of this corruption. What, then, is to be done to arrest it? Or, rather, what might not be done, if a strong and widely extended Christian sympathy should be awakened, and exerted in regard to them? Some of the female children of this class might be placed in well-ordered families in the city; and to a greater number the most important service that could be performed for them would be, to obtain for them places in good families in the country. And situations of usefulness might be found also for very many boys, either in the town or country, who are now forming for confirmed vagrancy, as fast as idleness and vice can train them for it. Is any one solicitous to accomplish the greatest good that he may, at the smallest possible expense, except of time and personal effort? Here are objects for all his benevolence, and here are opportunities for its fullest exercise. More, and much more, should be expected from the ministry at large in all these services, than from other Christians. But may not much be done in them also by other Christians? Have other Christians no personal responsibilities in view of these services?

I need not, and I would not, enter into much detail on this subject. Yet there are other objects, in this connexion, to which I am very desirous to call your attention.

Great improvements, it is well known, have been made in the organization and government of our prisons. These institutions are now, to an important extent, very favorable to the maintenance of a moral discipline, and the moral reformation of their inmates. This moral reformation is, in fact, so far accomplished in a considerable number of them, that they are prepared to leave the prisons with very sincere purposes of an upright and virtuous life. But they no sooner return to society, than they find themselves, by the very fact that they have been prisoners, cut off from all hope of employment wherever they are known. I have said they were

sincere in their purposes of a better life than they had formerly led. But their virtue has not strength to withstand that universal suspicion, which views and treats them as men who only want the opportunity of crime, to commit it. They are not allowed a trial of the sincerity they profess. They are treated as still criminals. And is it therefore wonderful, or even an argument against their sincerity, that they again fall into crime? Measures are therefore to be devised, and taken, to enable the reformed convict to obtain employment, to live like an honest man if he be sincerely disposed to live so. Now I should not have much confidence in any artificial and systematic arrangements for this purpose. But it seems to me, that, in proportion as a community shall become truly Christian in its character, it will sympathize with every form of human penitence. It will wish that the really penitent convict may be restored to society, and to the means and opportunities of improvement which society would give him. It would be willing to extend to him the means and opportunities of proving and perfecting his reformation. Am I not right? If I am, here then are circumstances which call for your sympathy and coöperation. Would it be impracticable, or either above or below the demands of the Gospel, for one and another of private Christians, each to interest himself in one or two prisoners; to interest himself in the families of these prisoners, during the separation of the convict from them; to meet these prisoners when they pass the threshold of their prisons; to obtain for them the employment by which they may support themselves and their families; and thus reinstate them in a condition of virtue and happiness? I am sure, that to a considerable extent, this is quite feasible, if there be a will to do it. I can indeed easily anticipate difficulties and objections. But I think that these would be unfelt in an advanced stage of Christian feeling among professed Christians. Nor do I believe that much will be done in this last stage of moral demand for the benefit of prisoners, till something like this connexion shall be formed with them, and this aid shall be extended to them.

Again. One of the best directions which can be given to benevolence, is that in which it is employed in aiding and encouraging the poor in all possible means of honorable self-support. And a means which may be effectual to this end, to a very great extent, is, their instruction in personal and

domestic economy; and in the circumstances and ways by which they may avail themselves, in the most favorable seasons for labor, of those small daily and weekly savings, which will go far towards the supply of fuel and clothing for the winter. I have said that there are many among us, who, as a matter of course, and of habit, look to the overseers of the poor, and to our benevolent societies, for their winter resources, whose earnings, wisely appropriated, are yet quite sufficient to secure to them all the comforts, which they now obtain through the aid of our benevolent institutions. Is it asked, How are such individuals, or families, to be excited to this forethought, and frugality? I answer, There are those, and I think they are not a few, to whom the offer of a premium, — for example, ten per cent., — would be an inducement to deposit weekly, with a friend, such small savings as they can make from their earnings; which savings, through the spring, summer, and autumn, would be sufficient to meet the extraordinary demands of winter. Why, then, allow me to ask each one, can you not seek out one, two, three, or four such families, upon which you will agree to call every week, for such sums as they can deposit with you? Do but become acquainted with these families, and let there be a distinct understanding between you and them of the whole plan, and of the manner in which it is to be executed, and the tax it will impose upon your time will not exceed half an hour in a week. If five dollars shall be thus saved, a premium must indeed be paid of fifty cents; and, if ten dollars shall be saved, a premium of a dollar. But not only is all which is so saved by a family, an equal saving to the community. The moral good is immense, of rescuing this family from pauperism, and from the dispositions and habits which belong to an accustomed and a willing dependence on charity. — I refer here to a class below the depositors in our Savings Bank. This is a means of doing good, which is now, to a considerable extent, in operation in England. It has done much to bring the rich and poor into a very interesting and useful connexion there, and to save many from dependence, and abjectness, and misery.

Look at those to whom you are extending your sympathy through the ministry at large, in the great diversity of their conditions. I do not say that their trials, their difficulties, and exposures are in themselves greater than are those of

many in far more favorable outward circumstances. They are not. It is well known that there is no greater destitution and misery among men, than are to be found among the most affluent; among those, who, it would seem, have the command of the greatest resources for enjoyment. But these are exceptions, and not a rule. There are men who are rich and honored, and are yet poor and unspeakably miserable. Yet property is a good. And so is an honorable standing in society, and an honored character. And so are friends. It is a very great good, in our difficulties, our trials, our exposures, to have those near us who are interested in us, and to whom we may look for the sympathy and assistance we may need. It is a very great good to have means at our control, which will relieve, if they will not remove, the causes of our trouble; and which, if they cannot inspire gladness, will at least help us to support affliction. And in the times of our great and pressing embarrassments, of our most painful conflicts, and of our most distracting cares, and fears, and sufferings, what would be our conditions, if we were at the same time without any of the aids which we now have in our standing in society, and in the sympathy for which we are indebted to it? Let these conditions be fairly and fully imagined, and faithfully brought home to ourselves, and we shall, perhaps, better comprehend, than we otherwise could, the pressing wants, and the Christian claims, of many about us.

The deepest, strongest, most pressing necessities of man, — what are they? Is it said, they are his necessities for shelter, for clothing, for food? I say, No! Shelter, and clothing and food are indeed necessities. They cannot be dispensed with. It is, ordinarily, the great business of life to provide them; and so absorbed is thought and care by these most obvious, obtrusive, and importunate of our wants, that our necessities of an incomparably higher character, because belonging to an incomparably higher department of our nature, are too easily overlooked, and are therefore felt to be subordinate in their claims. But the great necessities of human nature, little as they are understood by many, and feebly as they are uttered, are, *the necessities of sympathy and of interest, of respect, and counsel, and encouragement.* We indulge poor and low sentiments of human nature, and of human life. We confine our views of human nature to

the manifestations which we see of it under the artificial and perverted forms of society around us; and we too generally think of life, and make our dispositions of it, as well in regard to ourselves as others, as if the present duration of it would be of an indefinite extent, and its outward good and evil were all which was to be either feared or hoped for, suffered or enjoyed. Here, I believe, is beyond comparison the most influential and operative of the causes of the unchristian character and condition of Christendom. We have not attained to the interest in our fellow beings, the sympathy with them, and the respect for them, which are due from man to man. Here, then, is the ground from which we are to look at the great question of duty in this concern. I rejoice in the union which has been formed in our churches, to sustain the ministry at large. But the mere support of this ministry is a secondary object. The higher, and far more important one, is the extended connexion, which, through this ministry, it is to be hoped you will form with the less favored classes of our fellow beings around us. Let this connexion be formed, and maintained, in the spirit of the Gospel, and society, in all its departments, and all its details, will be known by you as it could not otherwise be known. A great amount of evil may thus be arrested and prevented, and an indefinite amount of good may be done, and of happiness conferred. There is no cause from which society with us, or any where, suffers so much, as from the want of a strong connexion, and interest, and sympathy, and *respect* between its members; and there are no other principles, there is no other spirit, than of Christianity, to which we may look with any confidence for this connexion, founded upon enlarged and liberal interests and sympathies, and sustained by a mutual, an equal, and a generous respect for each other. The highest principles of a mere worldly morality will do nothing in this cause. Nor can much be hoped for in it from human laws, or from any civil institutions, or even from any merely associated service, even for the highest purposes of benevolence and piety. It is to be the work of each one, in his own way, and according to his own power. Let each one, then, aiming first at his own highest Christian improvement, at once as his own greatest good and the most important of the means of aiding and blessing others, — and, then, in the spirit of the Gospel,

bringing himself into connexion with those to whom he would extend the offices of Christian interest and usefulness, let him seriously propose the inquiry for his own consideration, "What have I here to do, or what may I here do, which, in the most enlarged views of right and duty, I could myself, in a change of circumstances with those about me, reasonably expect that they, if they had my means and opportunities, should do for me?" The question of duty here might be, and indeed sometimes would be, one of very considerable embarrassment and difficulty. But, were all of us who call ourselves Christians, in this way faithfully to seek for light, and then faithfully to follow it, we should do more to manifest, and to advance our religion, by this exhibition of its power and fruits, than could be done by the array of all the abstract arguments that could be brought to bear upon it.

I regard the institution of Sunday schools, as marking one of the most important stages which have been made in the administration of Christianity; yet not indeed simply, or principally, from a reference to what *has been* done in them, and by them. I do not mean that there is not abundant evidence, that they have already conduced, and are conducing, to a degree of good, which may well strengthen the hearts of their supporters, and carry them on their way rejoicing. I can hardly, indeed, conceive of a more delightful association, than is that which is brought to our minds with the return of Sunday, in the thought of the many tens of thousands, — in the thought of the hundreds of thousands, of teachers and pupils, who are then brought together in the city, and in the country, and throughout Christendom, for giving and receiving the simplest elementary instruction respecting those truths and principles, the knowledge of which is infinitely above all other knowledge; and, through the influence of which upon the heart and character, the greatest good is to be looked for in time, and in eternity. Here, already, we see one of the most beautiful and touching of the influences which our religion is to exert, in the very extended and most intimate connexion, which, through this institution, has been formed at once between the instructers and their scholars, at ages most favorable for the most beneficent action upon each other; — and, which is far from being the least interesting circumstance, between the highest and humblest classes of society. This connexion,

this expression and action of sympathy, this great union and effort for the advancement of those interests, which should be, at once the highest and the paramount interests of childhood, and youth, and old age, of those of all grades of intellect, and of all conditions in society, — these seem to me to constitute the excellence and glory of our Sunday schools. In ten of the Sunday schools in our connexion in the city, we have 291 teachers, and 1632 pupils; and not a few of these children are from some of the poorest families among us, in which, without this institution, they would have received no religious instruction. What a means, therefore, have we here for carrying out the Christian doctrine of human brotherhood; the great, the morally sublime inculcation of Jesus, *He that would be greatest among you all, let him be the least of all, and the servant of all!* Here is the great lesson which should for ever be before the eyes and heart of the Sunday School Teacher, who would most effectually accomplish the great objects of his office. And let this lesson be learned, and faithfully practised, and new modes will be discovered of acting upon the minds and hearts of childhood, in the dispensation of religious instruction. Let this lesson be well learned and practised, and with it we shall acquire new power and means of giving an interest and an attraction to religious instruction. And let connexion with children, in this employment, lead teachers, wherever they have reason to believe it may be useful, to connexion with the parents of the children they instruct, for mutual knowledge and aid in regard to religious instruction, and the hopes of teachers and parents, to a greatly increased extent, will become realities. The ministry at large has, in our Sunday Schools, great facilities for its operations; and it has been among its objects to build up these schools, and to increase their efficiency as nurseries of religion and virtue. They are means of our own closer religious connexion with those whom we serve in our office; and may be means to any, who may be disposed to avail themselves of them, for a similar connexion.

The sentiment hardly requires illustration, that the constitution of society, and its tendencies, even under our free institutions, and with all the lights and aids we have obtained from Christianity, are of a character which calls for the strictest vigilance, even if it does not justify strong and most painful apprehensions. It is indeed most apparent, and it

would be very absurd to close our eyes or thoughts against the fact, that, within the freest institutions of the world, may be concealed the principles of the wildest anarchy, and of the most uncompromising despotism. The freest institutions of the world may become the nurseries, the hot-beds, of the most selfish and unprincipled ambition, of the most eager cupidity of wealth, and of every narrow interest and lawless passion, by which individual character may be degraded, and the very foundations of society unsettled and broken up. What, I ask, are the bonds of our civil union; or what are those of our religious connexions? What principles are generally discarded by us as unjust, either in our political plans or ends, or in looking at interests in one and another of the great departments of *industrial* enterprise, because they are inconsistent with a prevailing sense of acknowledged equal moral rights, and because Christianity therefore frowns upon, and condemns them? And how many are the connexions of the classes of society among us, and the intercommunications between them, which would not continue to be what they are, without a reference to any higher than immediate, and personal, or political objects? I have no ambition for the office of a censor of principles and manners. But if it be true, as I believe it is, that our government, and all our free institutions, are yet but experiments, and not settled results; — if it be true that our government is now in open conflict with itself and with the people, and that the people are in equally open conflict with themselves and with the government; if, instead of advancing in an identity of sympathies and interests in our various great circles of enterprise, and throughout the increasing subdivisions of employment among us, we are dividing and separating upon the principle, that our interests are not to be harmonized, and that each is therefore to be maintained by conflict, and to prosper only by victory; — and, moreover, if the rights of property, and of personal security, and of religious freedom, may be violated by mobs either in broad day, or at midnight, and decided by conflagration, or by other forms of outrage and violence; — then, I ask, what is the ground of our confidence, either of the long continuance of the union of the States, or of the permanence of those free institutions of which we boast as the greatest of our national blessings? There is no wilder delusion under which a community ever

existed, than that of the belief that a vicious, a corrupt, and a divided society, can very long continue to be *free*. The idea of freedom as necessarily comprehends *virtue* as one of its elements, — nay, it as necessarily comprehends virtue as the element of its very vitality, as it comprehends the idea of exemption from manacles and fetters of iron. This is a great truth; and it should be one of the first lessons inculcated and impressed upon the young, and one of the last to be lost sight of even in the last stage in the journey of life. Virtue, in its very essence, implies freedom; freedom of thought, of choice, and of will; and there can be no virtue without this freedom. It is, however, equally to be remembered, — for mistake on this subject may be fatal, and not only to individuals, but to communities, — that the action of thought, and of choice, and of the will, which is independent of virtue, and which disregards the lights and aids, the rules and ends of virtue, is, not freedom, but its greatest abuse and perversion. It not only is not freedom, but its necessary tendency is to anarchy, licentiousness, and every possible crime and misery. "The extreme of a thing," says the profound Bishop Butler, "not only is not that thing, but it is the very opposite of it." And what or where is the virtue, which will give so high a character, and so effectual a security to freedom, as that of Christianity? Let those who call themselves Christians be what their religion would make them, and freedom will be found among them, and security, and general prosperity and happiness, such as yet have never been found in any community. Who will not say, that this is indeed true? I reply, then, if it be true, and if other means of the greatest personal and social good have been found ineffectual and inadequate, why should we not set ourselves to the work at once of becoming better Christians, — more true to our religion, — as the means of securing these greater blessings?

There is no form of infidelity which has done, or is doing, any thing to check the progress of Christianity, compared with what has been done, and is doing, first, by the contradiction which is so manifest between the professions and lives of Christians; and, secondly, by the prevailing skepticism among Christians, first, of the possibility of any higher attainments than have yet been made in Christian practice, and, secondly, of any nearer approximation than has

yet been made to the objects of the Gospel. Nothing, indeed, can be more obvious, than is the fact, that, glorious as are the individual characters which our religion has formed, and great as have been the improvements which it has extended to society, it has yet done little in comparison with what it proposes to do; and little in comparison with what its believers think that it would do, if it exerted a greater influence upon those who receive it. Why, then, is not this greater influence exerted? And where, or how, shall we look for a better exertion of it? Here is a very wide field, not only for speculation, but for the most important practical lessons which can be learned by us. I cannot here discuss the topics which are thus suggested. But will you allow me to say, that, should the union which has been formed in our churches, for the support of a ministry at large in our city, be followed out, in these churches, as it should be, by making this ministry a medium of connexion and intercourse, and of higher Christian sentiments and sympathies, between the more and less favored classes in our community, I believe, and doubt not, that this union may be the means of a very great advancement of the Christian character among us, and thus of obtaining some of the highest objects of our religion. Nay, I believe that the moral good of this connexion, and the happiness consequent upon it, will be quite as great to those who serve, as to those who shall be served in it. — Let the principles be our starting points in this enterprise, — for with any other we may soon be discouraged, and shall at best do but little, — that their is no good to ourselves within human attainment, to be compared with that of our own daily advancement to a higher and purer virtue; and that we can in no way minister to so great a good to others, as through the influence, in ourselves, of a character, the simple and true virtue of which shall be *felt* by those with whom we may have intercourse. You have recognised the demand of the Gospel for an extended administration of our religion in our city. You have recognised the principle, that one of your responsibilities for your own Christian privileges, is, the widest extension which can be given of these privileges to those about you, who have them not. The measure by which you have expressed these recognitions, seems to me to be very far the most important which has for a long while been

taken by our churches. It is important, because it may lead, and, if on both sides we shall be faithful, it can scarcely fail to lead, to widely extended and most beneficial consequences to ourselves and to all about us. But your duty will be very partially done by a mere provision for the ministry. A very far greater work remains for you. I can say for my colleagues, as well as for myself, that either and each of us will be ready, at any time, and in any way, either to aid you, or to act for you, in any department of the service.

Respectfully,

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.

Boston, September, 1834.

ART. VII. — *Phrenology, or the Doctrine of the Mental Phenomena.* By G. SPURZHEIM, M. D. of the Universities of Vienna and Paris, and Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians, London. In 2 vols. First American Edition. Greatly improved by the Author, from the Third London Edition. Boston. Marsh, Capen, and Lyon. 1832. 8vo.

"ALL our philosophy," said the sprightly Fontenelle, "is the result of excessive curiosity and imperfect vision." If this account be true of philosophy in general, it is eminently true of those speculations concerning matter and spirit, their relation to each other and their connexion in man, which, at almost every period in the history of thought, have occupied the transcendental inquirer. For, while subjects of this sort are peculiarly adapted to excite curiosity and to interest the imagination, they are of all subjects the most perplexing, and have hitherto baffled alike all the powers of sense and all the resources of conjecture.

Yet it is precisely such subjects as these, that philosophy has ever loved to entangle herself withal. Ever since the time of Thales, and how much earlier, — in the twilight of Indian, Egyptian, or Persian antiquity, — we cannot say, the relation of matter and spirit has been a vexed topic, and a cardinal question in metaphysics. Whether, indeed, there be any two such distinct agencies as these terms imply, or

whether all laws and all phenomena may not rather be resolved into one sole agency, is still a moot point on which different schools are at issue. And those schools, which assume but one agency, have, on the nature of that agency, again divided into separate and extreme courses.

So that in the very foundations of this department of philosophy, there is as yet nothing fixed, nothing permanent; and, however some may think to build upon loose conjectures and groundless assumptions, we are convinced, for our part, that there will be no real progress in metaphysics, until the great questions to which we have alluded, are finally solved, or, in case such solution be found impossible, until the impossibility has been demonstrated and some other foundation agreed on. Now there have arisen from time to time grave men, who spake with authority, saying that philosophy must not meddle with questions like these, and that it behoved philosophers to withdraw their efforts from the hopeless structure of transcendental theorems, on which ages had been laboring in vain, and to give them a more profitable direction. But, no sooner had these teachers ceased, than philosophers returned to the forbidden work and raised anew the old Babel, and wrought and wrangled upon its unfinished walls, until scattered again by new disorder and confusion of tongues. Nor were they wrong in their search after absolute knowledge. The strong craving of the mind for such knowledge is a sufficient apology for pursuing it, — a God-given charter and a free warrant for whatever course it may elect. The true seeker of wisdom may not suffer himself to be guided by authority. No one must say to him, Lo here! or lo there! His own experience and not another's must teach him what ways are practicable, and what are not practicable, to man. It is not well to inquire too curiously concerning the limits of our knowledge. When men affirm that nothing can be known *à priori*, they do themselves judge *à priori*, and that too in direct contradiction of the only science which has ever arrived at absolute truth. In like manner, when it is asserted that there is no knowledge beyond the limits of experience, the limits of experience are already transgressed. Therefore let trancendental inquiry continue, let speculation, the loftiest, the wildest, have free course, until it shall be proved, not by the negative tes-

timony of previous failures, but by positive evidence, how far philosophy may go, and where God hath fixed her bounds.

We have said that speculations about matter and spirit are as old as philosophy. Dualism, or the doctrine of two principles, was the prevailing theory of the most ancient schools. The *Spirit* and *Water* of Thales, the *Nous* and the *Homoiomeriai* of Anaxagoras, the *Monas* and *Dyas* of Pythagoras, the *Heaven* and *Earth* of Parmenides, the *Enmity* and *Friendship* of Empedocles, the *Fire* and *Density* of Heraclitus, are all different forms of this system. We must not, however, suppose that Dualism, as held by the ancients, involved that perfect antithesis which we understand by matter and spirit. Their notions of spiritual existence seldom went beyond the idea of an *aura* or *æther*, or some other infinitely attenuated form of matter. But there can be no doubt that they intended by this a separate and distinct principle, — an antagonist to grosser matter.

Socrates too, though on far higher grounds, was a Dualist, so far as the human constitution is concerned. The systems which immediately succeeded him, — the school of Megara, the Cynics, Stoics, Epicureans, &c., paid but little regard to these matters ; and it was not till after their appearance, that philosophy developed itself in that two-fold direction in which it has come down to us. To the influence of Plato (who however was not a formal Idealist) must be traced that tendency to *idealism*, which in these latter times has been perfected in Berkeley and Fichte ; and with the school of Aristotle, himself no materialist, originated those sensual views which have received their full developement in the systems of such philosophers as Hobbes, Priestley, and the French Encyclopædists. If, in addition to these two divisions, we reckon the various attempts made by Des Cartes, Malebranche, and Leibnitz, to reconcile the opposite principles which they represent, we have, without regarding minor distinctions and skeptical theories, three grand divisions or schools of philosophy ; — the Ideal, comprehending all those systems which deny the objective reality, or, at least, the material basis of the outward world ; — the Sensual or Mechanical, embracing not only the different schemes of Materialism, but all those systems which attempt to explain the origin of our ideas mechanically, i. e. by sensations and im-

pressions;* — and lastly, Dualism, comprising every philosophical recognition of two principles or agencies, accompanied with an attempt to define their limits and relations.

Our purpose in these remarks, — the bearing of which on the subject before us may seem somewhat remote, — was to determine, as nearly as possible the position which Phrenology must occupy in relation to previous systems of philosophy, if allowed to take its place among them. It is evidently a branch of the Sensual school, and must be considered as belonging to the lowest form of that school. It is in fact a system of pure Materialism. We are fully aware that some of its professors have labored to avoid this imputation, but, as it seems to us, unsuccessfully and unwisely. Unsuccessfully, because the fundamental principle, and indeed the whole structure, of their doctrine is an everlasting contradiction to any disclaimer which they may see fit to make on this subject; — unwisely, because the disavowal of Materialism gives an appearance of inconsistency to their system, and by this means deprives it of the small degree of consideration it might otherwise claim. If we are right in our suspicions, the motive of this disavowal proceeds partly from a natural, though very unphilosophical, dread of a consequence so startling, but chiefly from a fear of the discredit which it might bring upon their doctrine. This is mistaken policy. The worst feature which any philosophy can exhibit is inconsistency; and no system is entitled to respect, which does not candidly admit, and resolutely meet the consequences which naturally flow from it. Not that Phrenology would be any more true, if it assumed the form of avowed Materialism. God forbid! But it would certainly deserve in that form a more patient hearing. The Phrenologist may profess, if he pleases, that he is not a Materialist; such a profession is nothing to the purpose, except to prove, that his instinctive good sense is truer than his

* It need hardly be observed, that this division includes Locke and all metaphysicians of that class. With regard to Locke, indeed, the cool insinuation contained in his "Essay," (Book IV. c. III.), and afterwards defended in a letter to Bishop Stillingfleet, that God may have "superadded to matter a power of thinking," seems to discover in that philosopher a strong *inclination*, to say the least, toward downright Materialism.

philosophy ; — but when he asserts that Phrenology is not Materialism, he shows himself utterly deficient in logic, and renders his whole system ridiculous. Phrenology *is* Materialism. Every theory of the mental faculties, professing to be the whole account of man, and not taking its stand within the mind as an immaterial substance, — but in a collection of matter, — does, by its very definition, come under that denomination. In vain would the phrenologist distinguish between the manifestations of the mind and the mind itself. The mind has absolutely and professedly no place in his system ; it does not come into consideration. What does come into consideration ? A mass of cineritious and medullary matter called the brain, to which all intellectual and moral phenomena are referred. Consequently the manifestations of which he speaks, are manifestations of this cineritious and medullary substance, and he has no authority whatever for calling them manifestations of the mind. He has found what he deems a sufficient cause for the phenomena in question, and it is altogether unphilosophical to speak of any other. When, therefore, the phrenologist talks of mind as distinct from the brain, he talks *extra scholam*, i. e. from a point not given in the philosophy itself, but assumed beyond it. He speaks, not as an expounder of the system, but as a critic sitting in judgment upon it. Now it must be evident, even to one less skilled in dialectics, if that were possible, than the author of the work before us, that every system of philosophy is to be judged from its own principles and the deductions naturally flowing therefrom, and not from the exoteric assertions of it disciples. The Phrenologist says, "The organs do not constitute the mind." That we well know ; but what then are these organs ? They are the causes of mental phenomena. What is the conclusion ? Evidently that there is no mind. And this conclusion, derived from the direct testimony of the system itself, is confirmed by many hints which have fallen from its chief expounders. Mr. Combe is consistent, and boldly declares that we have no knowledge of mind independent of matter. "The mind, as it exists by itself, can never be an object of philosophical investigation" *! It is not easy to gather from Dr. Spurzheim's Introduction, made up as it is of in-

* See Combe's Phrenology. Last Edition. P. vi.

coherent and often unmeaning propositions, any definite opinion. The following sentence, however, the only one out of three pages, which can be considered as expressing the writer's own views, seems to corroborate the truth of our assertion. "The doctrine of immaterial substances is not sufficiently amenable to the test of observation; it is founded on belief, and only supported by hypothesis." Both of the abovementioned writers have labored to prove, that metaphysical inquiry is useless, and that anatomists and physiologists are the only true interpreters of man's moral and intellectual nature. This modest example has found ready imitators. The pretensions of these men have been loudly echoed by their followers. Phrenology is proclaimed, with that boastfulness which always distinguishes sciolism, to be the ultimate and complete science of man, — the last and highest attainment of human wisdom. The beautiful region of mental philosophy is to be converted into a barren *Golgotha*, or place of skulls. Yes! this ignoble doctrine, born of the dissecting-knife and a lump of medulla, betraying at every step its mean extraction, — thus carnal philosophy, with its limited conceptions, its grey truisms, its purblind theories, its withering conclusions, and its weary dogmatism, is to supplant the lofty faith of antiquity, and the sublime philosophy of the Bible, and to sit in judgment on the infinite and eternal! A great discovery has been made! It is ascertained, that there is no indwelling spirit in man. Those godlike powers which raise us above time and sense, — those thoughts which compass heaven and earth, and commune with the All-Wise and True, are not, as was once fondly deemed, the immaterial functions of an immaterial being. "*Nous avons changé tout cela.*" The anatomist has taken the subject into consideration. Those powers, those thoughts, are the products of little lumps of flesh, measuring each an inch in diameter, weighing altogether about two pounds avoirdupois. Behold here the true nature and the full dimensions of the human soul! A discovery so important certainly deserves attention. We can give it, however, but a brief examination.

The brain is the *sole* organ of the mind; it is divided into several compartments, each of which exercises a separate function, producing a corresponding manifestation of the moral or intellectual faculties. These are the fundamental

theses of Phrenology. On the truth of these, the evidence of the doctrine mainly depends. If these positions can be demonstrated, — established beyond the possibility of philosophical doubt, then there is a presumption in favor of the hypothesis, that the character of a moral agent, — no, not of a moral agent, for the supposition precludes moral agency in any proper sense of that term, — that the character of a human being is determined by, and may be interpreted from, the brain. The brain is the organ of the mind. This is not a discovery of the phrenologists. Nor do they claim it. The doctrine was advanced at a very early stage in medical science, and has been maintained by many eminent anatomists and physiologists ever since. Nor is it at all surprising that a philosopher of this class should be led to such a conclusion. Dealing solely with matter, knowing nothing *but* matter, and having found that many phenomena of human nature may be traced to organization, he naturally concludes that intellectual and moral phenomena are attributable to the same cause; and having once fastened them on the flesh, the brain, from the peculiarity of its structure and its situation with respect to other parts, is found a very convenient place for their location. But the question is, whether the testimony of the physiologist is to be received as the only valid evidence on this point. So Phrenology would have it. But we say, not. The physiologist must either admit or deny that there is an immaterial agent in man. If he deny it, we call upon him to prove that there is a material agent, — that man exists at all. And this, if we are not mistaken, he will find himself sorely puzzled to do, without appealing at once to an immaterial principle, — a principle, of which his five senses and his dissecting-knife, and all the surgical and all the chemical apparatus ever invented, can never give him the slightest knowledge. At all events, we will undertake to prove the existence of mind with as much conclusiveness, to say the least, as he can prove the existence of matter. If he admit that there is an immaterial agent, he cannot deny that that agent may act on itself, and, by such action, obtain knowledge of its nature and its relations, — in short, that the metaphysician may speak on these subjects as well as the physiologist. As metaphysicians, then, arguing from consciousness, from reason, and reflection, we affirm that the brain is not the sole organ of the mind; that, on the con-

trary, many of the mental faculties are wholly independent of this organ.* Reason and reflection cannot demonstrate this, but neither can the observations of the physiologist *demonstrate* the contrary. We have, then, assertions and arguments on both sides, and either testimony is equally valid.

When it is said that the brain is the organ of the mind, one of two things is intended, — either that the mind is manifested by the brain, or that it operates through the brain. If it be maintained that the mind manifests itself by means of the brain, we reply, that a great portion of the mind's action is not manifested at all, — which makes the brain, so far, useless; and that, when the mind does manifest itself, it is, as every one knows, by means of the hands and feet, the lips, eyes, &c., showing at least as great a dependence on these organs, as on the brain. If it be maintained that the mind operates by means of the brain, we throw the burden of proof on the physiologist, and demand *positive* demonstration of the fact. For we are by no means satisfied with the evidence hitherto adduced in support of it. And however we may be disposed to admit that those faculties and propensities which connect us immediately with the outward world, such as observation and calculation, the sensual appetites, and the earthly affections, are determined by cerebral developements, it seems to us utterly improbable — nay, impossible, — that the powers and propensities of our spiritual nature, the will (meaning thereby moral self-determination), faith, love of God (not veneration), consciousness, reason, &c., are thus determined; and nothing less than absolute demonstration will convince us of the fact. The only way to demonstrate this point would be, to show the brain

* This is not the place to offer the *metaphysical* arguments alluded to above. Our object at present is to examine the arguments of the phrenologists, meeting them on their own ground, and on ground common to all parties. We will, however, just glance at the nature of the reasoning, by which we conclude that there are mental faculties independent of the brain. Take *consciousness*, for example, or the faculty of self-intuition. We maintain, that this faculty cannot, from its very nature, be exercised by a material organ. In consciousness, we perceive *self*, with all its spiritual powers, to be an absolute, indivisible *one;* and of this we are more certain than we can be of any thing else. But matter is made up of separate *parts*, ergo, matter cannot be conscious. Granting even (what is absurd) that a particle of matter could be *self*-conscious, it cannot be conscious of other particles.

in the act of performing these functions. As this cannot be done, demonstration is out of the question, and all that can be offered is presumptive evidence. Mr. Combe, indeed, affirms that "consciousness" refers the mind to the brain as its seat. But this we do not hesitate to pronounce impossible. For, to be conscious of the location of the soul, — i. e. of our absolute self, — in space, would require us to perceive our *self* with the same sense by which we perceive surrounding matter, — just as we perceive our bodily position in the material world, by means of the eye, which determines the relation of the body to surrounding objects. But we know that the soul can distinguish itself only through the medium of consciousness; and its corporeal relations (whether external or internal), only by means of the senses. It is true, we sometimes hear men speak of *feeling* the operation of thought in the brain. This is because thinking is sometimes accompanied with sensations in that quarter. But the inference drawn from this fact, that thinking is felt in the brain, Kant has aptly shown to be an instance of that error in logic called *subreptio;* that is to say, an opinion concerning the cause of a feeling is confounded with the feeling of a cause.* Nothing is more common, as a late physiologist has remarked, than to confound the accompanying circumstance with the immediate cause.† *Post hoc, ergo propter hoc*, is a very natural but often a very unwarrantable conclusion. If those pains in the head, which sometimes accompany severe thinking, were the direct effects of thinking, they ought, according to phrenology, to be felt principally in the region of the organs corresponding to the particular faculties called into action. But this, so far as our experience goes, is not the case. When thinking on abstract subjects, the pain, — if we felt any, — was not in the region of "comparison" and "causality" as, in the absence of a special organ for thinking (a great defect, by the way, in Phrenology), it ought to have been; on the contrary, it was somewhere about "reverence," "firmness," and "conscientiousness," or else in the midst

* See Kant's Letter to Sömmering, "Ueber das Organ der Seele," in which the absurdity and contradiction, implied in the attempt to assign a locality to the soul, are ably exposed.

† Hunter on the Blood.

of that populous little colony situated just over the eyes,—"weight," "coloring," "order," &c. &c.

The pains in question we have not ourselves very often experienced (doubtless because we have not thought sufficiently), but we are convinced that they may be accounted for by a very different supposition; namely, by that very duplicity and antagonism of mind and body, which Phrenology labors to overthrow. It is a well known fact, that neither the bodily nor the mental powers can be exercised exclusively for any length of time without injury to the other. The latter, indeed, will suffer less perceptibly from this cause than the former; because it is possible, in this world, to live for the body only. But still, we are justified in saying that the intellectual and moral nature of one who lives thus, *suffers*. In like manner, when the mind has been long and intensely engaged, the body suffers. It suffers, not merely for the want of muscular exercise, but because the whole vitality of the system being, as it were, absorbed in mind, the action of the vital functions, circulation, secretion, &c., is impeded. And this suffering is, of course, felt soonest in the most sensitive (i. e. nervous) parts, consequently in the brain.

Of the arguments advanced by Dr. Spurzheim to prove the dependence of the mind upon the brain, the following only appear to us to have any weight. First, if the brain be not the organ of the mental faculties, it exists to no purpose, as no other use can be assigned for it. Allowing this to be true, there are other parts of the body, for which no use can be assigned, or which do not come into use. No satisfactory explanation has yet been given of the spleen. The muscles which move the ear, in common with many others, are never called into action, and, except in very few instances, cannot be exercised.* To what purpose are certain organs of sense double? since, according to Spurzheim, we see with only one eye, and hear with only one ear. Besides, is it certain that no other use can be found for the brain? Other uses certainly *have* been assigned. According to some physiologists, it is an organ of secretion, and, according to very many, the origin and source of the nerves. And, though we are not disposed to question the superior

* See Sömmering, "De Humani Corporis Fabricâ."

knowledge of cerebral anatomy, so constantly claimed in the work before us, in behalf of the authors of Phrenology, yet we suppose it will be allowed, that even "Gall and I" may be mistaken, not, perhaps, in their discoveries,* but in the hypotheses built upon them. It would seem that the brain is necessary to the vital functions from the fact, that *acephali* though frequently born alive, continue to live but a short time.

The second argument is the alleged fact, that the energy and perfection of the mental faculties are always proportioned to the developement of the brain, and that in idiots this organ is always defective. That there is a certain connexion between a sound organization and a sound mind, we do not pretend to deny. What the nature of this connexion is cannot be ascertained. It seems analogous to the connexion which exists between the perfection of the Divine mind, and the perfection of the universe. Men, who are destined to play an important part in the moral world, and to act powerfully on their age, are generally endowed with a sound corporeal frame. There are exceptions, but such is the rule. But this soundness of body is not confined to the brain; it is required to a greater or less extent in all the other parts of the system. Those who are by birth deficient in any essential part of the human frame, never become great men. A deaf and dumb person, or a blind person, may be capable of high intellectual effort, and exhibit many bright manifestations of mind. But such persons cannot exert any powerful influence on society; their intellectual manifestations are imperfect, and, so far as the defective senses are concerned, they even appear idiotic. A person destitute of all the senses, — if that were possible, — would probably appear wholly so. In like manner a native idiot has, doubtless, processes of thought going on within him. There is, evidently, a spirit at work in that crazy fabric. It is not in the essential properties of mind that he is wanting, but, owing to a very imperfect organization of a very important part, he is unfitted to the world in which he lives. So far as *that* is

* It should be remembered, however, that the Report presented to the National Institute of France, by a committee, of which it is sufficient to say, that Cuvier was at its head, was by no means favorable to the discoveries of the phrenologists.

concerned, he is foolish and inefficient. In many cases, if not in all, idiocy consists in a disease of the nerves; and, where this is the case, it can prove nothing with respect to the peculiar dependency of the mind on the cerebral parts; for we know that every disease tends to weaken the mental functions, whether its seat be in the chest, or the abdomen, or the brain.* We had other views to offer on this subject, tending to the same conclusion, but our limits press. For this reason we must pass briefly over the third and last argument, drawn from instances of insanity, which sometimes accompany injuries of the brain. On this topic we can only remark; 1st, that in most cases of insanity there is no injury of the brain, and, that such cases are not to be explained by the hypothesis in question; 2dly, that, according to the testimony of many physiologists, — among others, of Sömmering, whose authority on this subject will hardly be questioned, — the brain may be injured in any of its parts without any perceptible damage to the mental powers.†

The doctrine we are considering involves many difficulties which must be solved, before the confident tone assumed by phrenologists, in relation to this subject, can be justified. On the supposition, that the brain is the sole organ of the mind, how are we to account for our memory of the past and our consciousness of continued identity, since every particle of the body passes off, according to some physiologists once in five years, or, according to others, once in three? How are we to explain the fact, that men of a lean habit manifest the intellectual powers in as great perfection as those of a contrary habit? Since, according to Spurzheim, the volume of the brain increases with the size of the body. But, above all, if it be true, as phrenologists assert, that this dependence of mind on brain holds through all the orders of animated nature, why is not the brain in the lower tribes always proportioned to the amount of mind manifested by them? It requires but a cursory observation to perceive, that this is far from being the case.‡ Not to insist on the

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* Thus, melancholy and monomania may be caused by disorders of the liver.

† "Nulla etiam pars est cerebri, quæ non subinde indurata, vulnerata, pure exesa, corrupta, sine tamen notabili et vitæ et animi virium damno, sit inventa." — Sömmering, De Hum. Corp. Fabricâ.

‡ Our author appears to be perfectly aware of this circumstance, but we do not find that he has made any attempt to explain it.

example of vertebrated animals, in several of whom the proportion of the brain to the rest of the body is larger than in man; what are we to say of the astounding manifestations of mind displayed by the insect world; exemplified, not only in the wonderful contrivances of the bee, the spider, and the common ant, but in actions more wonderful still, as having no immediate reference to the necessities of life, and as bearing the nearest brute resemblance to the peculiar manifestations of human beings. Such are the wars of conquest carried on by different nations of the termites, in which the vanquished become the captives and slaves of the victors, and are subjected by them to all kinds of servile labor. Now in these animals, the brain (if there be any) is not only small, absolutely and relatively; but its very existence is exceedingly problematical. Many physiologists, with Linnæus at their head, have denied it. Cuvier, whose authority on such subjects is paramount, called the ganglion above the œsophagus a brain, but denied that it bore any analogy to the cerebral organ in vertebrated animals.* And, if it be true, that some insects, as the caterpillar,† for example, will live, and even walk, for some days after the loss of their heads, it is evident that the *will*, at least, supposed by phrenologists to be a resident in the brain, cannot reside there in insects.

But, let us suppose for a moment, that some of the intellectual faculties, such as memory and observation, have their seat in the brain; it is evident that the arguments which are usually advanced in support of this supposition entirely fail, when applied to the affections, the passions, and all those feelings and emotions, which, in common phraseology come under the denomination of the "heart." Our experience refers the action of these feelings and emotions, neither to the cerebrum nor the cerebellum, but to other parts of the system. An emotion of anger causes the knees to shake, but leaves "combativeness" and every other *ativeness* in the phrenological *ennead* of propensities, unmoved. The remembrance of some luckless *étourderie* suffuses the cheek, but rises no higher than the temples. Desire lengthens respiration into sighs, but stops short with the intercostal muscles. Fear arrests the motion of the heart, mirth moves the

* See Cuvier's Anat. Comp. † See Kirby and Spence. Letter 37th.

diaphragm and the risorius muscle, and grief acts on the abdomen and the lachrymal glands; but not one, out of the twelve islands of the brain assigned to sentiment and affection by phrenologists, manifests any conscious participation in these effects.* It would seem, then, that there is as much reason for supposing that the heart or that the abdomen is the seat of the *affective* faculties, as there is for referring them to the brain; and the Scriptures may be considered as using language not wholly figurative, when they speak of those parts as synonymous with certain sentiments and affections.

But we cannot stop to argue this point any further, though much remains to be said. We trust we shall not be misunderstood. We do not mean to deny, that the brain is in any sense the medium of the soul. We repeat, that we have no objection to supposing a more intimate relation between that organ and some of the lower faculties; though we think even this far from certain. But we believe that there are many of the spiritual powers and affections which have no connexion whatever with the brain, except so far as that is connected with the essential functions of animal life. One need only review the history of opinions on this subject, to be convinced how hypothetical the whole matter is. While some physiologists have supposed that the mind occupied the whole of the brain, others, thinking that too large a space for so insignificant an agent, have placed it in the cerebellum, others again have confined it to the commencement of the spinal marrow, others to the corpus callosum, and so on. The errors into which phrenologists and others have fallen, on this subject, have arisen from the false notion, that the soul must have a local habitation, and every faculty and affection a local origin, thus applying the material relations of space to things in their nature immaterial. The connexion of the soul with the body is not *local* but *virtual*, and this connexion, such as it is, refers not to the brain only, but, in a greater or less degree, to every part of the system.

If, then, the first and fundamental principle of phrenology be yet undemonstrated, and, as we have labored to show, indemonstrable, what is to be said of the superstructure

* The mechanical connexion, which the nervous system supposes between the effects here described and the brain, is not to be confounded with their psychical origin and conscious manifestation.

which its advocates have raised upon it? What confidence is due to a system based on a mere hypothesis? And, if the first principle of this system is doubtful, the second is still more so. This, our readers will remember, supposes the brain to consist of a multitude of separate and independent organs, each of which performs a separate mental function. To those who are acquainted with the boastful pretensions of Phrenology to be a science of facts, and to eschew every thing but facts, it may seem rather surprising that no facts have yet been advanced in support of the abovementioned position. It will be understood that we speak now of *physiological* facts, which are to prove the multiplicity of mental organs in the brain and their independent action *physiologically*, and as it were, *a priori*, without reference to the historical coincidences, supposed to have been discovered between certain traits of character and certain protuberances of the skull. This is an after-consideration. It must be first proved, that the several convolutions act as independent organs, and then it may be shown what mental functions correspond to them. Of such physiological facts, we repeat it, there are none within our knowledge. Analogies and probabilities are offered in abundance, but no facts. We are, accordingly, spared all further trouble on this point, and shall proceed at once to the consideration of those *historical* facts, on which, so much stress has been laid by the defenders of Phrenology, and on which, alone, some of its non-professional advocates seem disposed to ground the system. And here we think it necessary to remark, that facts *prove* nothing in science, unless they are so universal as to become settled principles. Without such universality they admit of various interpretation, and, according to the interpretation given them, may be used for very different purposes. Universality is the necessary condition and distinguishing characteristic of science. If Phrenology, therefore, is to be considered as any thing more than a system of *craniomancy* or *skull-guessing*, which will sometimes hold good, and sometimes not, — the facts on which it rests must be uniform. A single exception destroys their validity; just as the doctrine of gravitation would sink into a mere hypothesis, if a body thrown into the air did not always fall to the ground, but only now and then; or as chemistry would cease to be a science, if it depended on chance, whether, under given conditions, the principle of attraction would hold or fail. If it can be proved, that in

every case, without exception, certain qualities of mind are accompanied with certain developements of brain, we shall, notwithstanding all that has been said, submit to the irresistible conclusion, that there is necessary connexion between those qualities and the corresponding developements. Yet, even then, we could not admit Phrenology to be a complete science of human nature, inasmuch as it leaves out of view some of the most important of the human faculties. But what is the fact? The coincidences between brain and character adduced in support of Phrenology, far from possessing the universality required, do not even outweigh the exceptions. If we may trust our own limited observation, and the testimony of many more competent observers, the exceptions are far more numerous. But it is with this as with other favorite theories. Zealous partisans magnify a few corroborating facts, and suppress, or even fail to notice, the cases which make against them. Bacon's aphorism, on this subject, is so much in point, that one might almost suppose it written with a prophetic reference to Phrenology. "When the mind is once pleased with certain things, it draws all others to consent and go along with them; and though the power and number of instances that make for the contrary are greater, yet it either attends not to them or despises them; or else *removes and rejects them by a distinction; with a strong and pernicious prejudice to maintain the authority of its first choice unviolated.** And hence, in most cases of superstition, as of astrology, &c., those who find pleasure in such vanities always observe where the event answers; but slight and pass by the instances in which it fails, which are much the more frequent. This mischief diffuses itself much more subtilly in philosophies and the sciences; where that which has once pleased, infects and subdues all other things, though much more substantial and valuable than itself. And, though the mind were free from this delight and vanity, yet it has the peculiar and constant error of being more moved and excited by affirmatives than by negatives, whereas it should duly and equally yield to both. But, on the contrary, in the raising of true *axioms*, negative instances have the greatest force." †

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* Does not this describe exactly the method pursued by phrenologists in relation to unfavorable instances?

† Novum Organum, Aph. 46.

The "Novum Organum," from which these words are taken, though misinterpreted in the common acceptation of the Baconian philosophy, and improperly extended beyond the limits of natural science, is yet the best possible test of philosophies that appeal to observation. Tried by this test, Phrenology cannot stand. It has no sufficient foundation in facts; its boasted experience falls far short of the rigid demands of the "Instauration." We should transgress all bounds, were we to attempt any thing like an enumeration of the facts unfavorable to Phrenology. Let the following example stand instead of a thousand. We extract it from an article on this subject in a late number of the "Cyclopædia of Practical Medicine." "Some hundreds and even thousands of monomaniacs, in all of whom certain feelings and propensities have been developed even to morbid excess, have passed a part of their lives under the inspection of M. Esquirol, who possesses most extensive resources for elucidating almost every subject connected with the history of mental diseases, and has neglected no inquiry which could further the attainment of that object. At his establishment at Ivry, he has a large assemblage of crania and casts from the heads of lunatics, collected by him during the long course of his attendance at the Salpétrière, and at the Royal Hospital at Charenton. While inspecting this collection, the writer of the present article was assured by M. Esquirol, that the testimony of his experience is entirely adverse to the doctrine of the phrenologists; it has convinced him that there is no foundation whatever in facts for the system of correspondences, which they lay down between certain measurements of the heads and the existence of peculiar mental endowments. This observation by M. Esquirol was made in the presence of Mr. Mitivié, physician to the Salpétrière, and received his assent and confirmation. There are few if any individuals in Europe whose sphere of observation has been so extensive as that of M. Esquirol; but testimonies to the same result may be collected from unbiassed witnesses, whose evidence taken collectively may have nearly equal weight."* We have no doubt that the

* Rudolphi, a German physiologist, says that he has examined many hundreds of brains without finding any thing favorable to the Phrenological theory.

ingenuity of phrenologists may contrive some evasion of the obvious inference which must be drawn from facts like these; but, with every one who does not stand committed on this subject, we are sure that one such testimony must be decisive. We will, however, add one more. Dr. Prichard, in his late work "on the Physical History of Mankind," after showing that the skulls of African Negroes allow less room for cerebral developement than those of Europeans, observes, on the question whether any difference of intellectual capacity be connected with this circumstance, that, as far as he has had opportunity of collecting information on the subject, the result has been a decided assurance that Negroes are not inferior in intellect to Europeans; that this has been the almost uniform testimony of intelligent planters and medical practitioners from the West Indies; and that among the former, notwithstanding their prejudices, he has not met with one out of a great number, who did not give a most positive testimony as to the natural equality of the African Negro and the European.

The phrenologist's account of what he is pleased to call the mind, is unquestionably the most absurd theory that was ever contrived to support a beloved hypothesis. His classification of the mental powers is an insult to consciousness. The whole system is framed with exclusive reference to this world; for even "veneration" does not necessarily imply a Supreme Being as its object. It has no point of contact with the world of spirits, and renders many spiritual phenomena, — regeneration for example, — altogether inexplicable. That Reason, Faith, Consciousness, and the power of moral self-determination should be left out of view in this system, as not coming within the experience of phrenologists, is not surprising. But how are we to account for the omission of so obvious and common a faculty as Memory? Is the whole ground preoccupied? Is there no more room in cerebrum or cerebellum? Cannot the advocates of this doctrine by a little different arrangement, by crowding or retrenching, by omitting *veneration*, say, or *conscientiousness*, find space for one more organ? If they can, we advise them to do so with all speed, and to call that organ Memory; for, if there is any thing certain about the human mind, it is the existence of such a faculty. Its operation is not to be explained by the combined functions of other powers. If any attribute of the mind is single and distinct, this is so.

The prevalence and popularity of Phrenological views may seem to require explanation. It is well known to most of our readers, how suddenly the doctrine established itself, and how rapidly it gained ground in this region. No sooner had its late distinguished apostle appeared in our city, than a *pentecost* was witnessed, such as philosophy has not known before, since the days of the later Platonists. All tongues were loosed, and a strange *onomastic* was in every man's mouth. Heads of chalk, inscribed with mystic numbers, disfigured every mantel-piece. Converts multiplied on all sides, some proselytes of the covenant, and some proselytes of the gate. A general inspection and registry of heads took place. In defiance of the Apostolic injunction, hands were laid suddenly on all men, and many by such imposition were ordained teachers. A cast was given them as a diploma, "*una cum potestate publice prælegendi*," &c. In short, this theory of man obtained a speedy and signal triumph, and all the higher principles of our nature were in danger of being entombed in the little *tumuli* of the brain. Happily, however, the prevalence of a doctrine is no test whatever of its soundness. On the contrary, there is much truth in what Bacon has said on this subject; "Consent ought to be so far from passing as any real authority, as to give a violent suspicion of the contrary; for of all characteristics that is the worst, which men take from consent in matters of the understanding. So that the thought of Phocion * may be justly transferred from intellectuals to morals; for men ought directly to examine themselves wherein they have erred, when the multitude consents and applauds them. This sign, therefore, of general consent, is one of the most unfavorable that a philosophy can have." † We are not at all apprehensive that this system will ever find much favor with philosophers and scientific men. For, not to mention the intellectual poverty of the doctrine, and the entire absence (manifested, for example, in the work before us) of all great and far-reaching views, — a philosophy which has been rejected by such men as Cuvier, Sabatier, and Pinel, and that too on purely physiological grounds, has but a slender chance

* Phocion, being once highly applauded by the multitude, turned round to his friends and asked what absurdity he had committed.

† Nov. Org., Aph. 77.

of success with the learned. Meanwhile its prevalence among the unlearned is easily accounted for. A philosophy of some sort, — a philosophy of human nature, which, whether true or false, may be paraded and talked about, is a luxury to which, in these days, almost every one aspires. But, unluckily, a system of philosophy was till lately a difficult acquisition. The aspirant was forced, either to turn his attention within himself, — a very uninteresting employment; or else to read books which required some degree of mental application, — an unpleasant alternative. But now there springs up a system which requires no such hard conditions; — a philosophy which appeals simply and solely to the senses, and is therefore suited to the humblest capacity and the coarsest taste; — a philosophy which lays out human nature in the form of a map, so that every man, woman, or child, who will take the trouble to spend a few hours over that map, and learn the names of its different provinces, with their respective location, may rise up a philosopher, completely versed in the noble science of man. Is it wonderful that a system so cheap and easy should find ready followers?

One word in conclusion as to the purpose of this discussion. It was not the heavy tax levied upon the credulity of the people, nor yet the irreligious tendency of the doctrine, evidenced by various symptoms, that induced us to take up arms against Phrenology. Our chief object has been to expose the presumption with which this doctrine arrogates to itself the supreme right to dictate on subjects beyond the reach of physical inquiry. While the discoveries, or supposed discoveries, of Gall bore the humble name of *Craniology*, we felt no disposition to interfere with them. We deemed it an innocent, though not a very profitable occupation for those who had no other employment, to hunt out coincidences between the heads and the characters of their friends. But when this science assumed the title of Phrenology, when it usurped the rights of mental philosophy, and presumed to pass judgment on questions which require far other discipline, and far other powers; when it brought to the dissecting-table the powers and properties of the inner man, and sought to lay bloody hands on the sacred image of God; we began to fear its carnal influence. And it is on this ground that we have thought proper to discuss freely its

character and its claims. The encroachment of the senses and of sensual philosophy on the domain of consciousness and faith, is a species of invasion which we shall never cease to resist with such force as our limited powers, and our strong convictions, may supply. We shall always render unto the physical sciences the things that are theirs, and we shall claim equal justice in behalf of "that interior truth, whose school and oracle are within the breast." *

ART. VIII. — *Memoir of S. Osgood Wright, late Missionary to Liberia.* By B. B. THATCHER. Boston: Light & Horton. New York: Moore & Payne; Leavitt, Lord, & Co. 1834. pp. 122.

THIS is an able delineation of an unpretending life and character, as interesting as it is instructive. The principal source, from which the details of the Memoir were derived, is the private journal of its subject. It is seldom, in this country, that literary justice is done the prominent members of the denomination of which this individual was so promising an ornament. Their honors of this kind have been reaped in England. Among us the Methodists are more known by their oral, than by their written productions, or biographies prepared by professional writers. Their labors, too, are as unassuming as they are sedulous. One, indeed, of their clergy, by his unremitting efforts and fervid eloquence in behalf of a neglected class of our population, has endeared himself universally, and become identified with the benevolent spirit of the day. And we welcome the little work before us not least, because it is the story of *his* younger brother's martyrdom in the cause of religion and humanity.

Mr. Wright was a native of Springfield, in Massachusetts, where his early years were passed under happy domestic and local influences, the genial effect of which upon his susceptible feelings, were fully manifested in his after life. He did not pass the ordeal of youthful temptation, however, without feeling, and, to some extent, yielding to its power.

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* Norris's "Ideal World."

And there is not a more affecting and improving lesson in his history, not excepting its melancholy termination, than the conscientious record of his early dereliction from duty, the regret and mortification thus induced, and his subsequent and complete reformation. He dwells, with the bitterest self-reproach, upon this brief period of his life, nor attempts, even to himself, to qualify its folly by referring it to his youth, his circumstances, or any other palliative cause. In the struggle which succeeded the first conviction of his almost fatal error, between his old habits of thinking and his newly awakened sense of right, he seems well nigh to have yielded himself to despair; but the better purpose eventually triumphed.

"More than once," says he, "in the still hour of midnight, did I wander to the river's brink, with the rash resolution of there ending my troubles by a precipitate rush into a dread eternity! Eternity! ah! that was a word of fearful, untold import, and then it pealed upon my ear in terrible accents. Oh! if I could have read and believed then, what my heart so much wished was true, that death was an eternal sleep, I had not been here to record my presumptuous revellings. But no! the clear, deep stream before me, the slumbering dead beside me, the solemn silence of the night, — so many audible voices, uttering, in unison with my own conscience, the alarming truth, — *After death comes the judgment!* could I rush into the presence of a justly offended God, who seemed to be looking down upon me through every twinkling star that adorned the clear heavens? But there was the gently undulating river, and down, where the moonbeams seemed to be lost in the dark depths, I saw a grave where I fondly hoped I might be for ever, yes, *for ever* concealed! *And is God not there?* said a voice, which was heard above the conflicting, clamorous passions of my breast! I could not deny it, and nerving my heart, as for another dreaded combat, I sought again my bed." — pp. 30, 31.

Mr. Wright was first incited to self-examination by one of those eloquent appeals which characterize the preaching of his persuasion, and his most effectual religious impressions were derived from intercourse with its members. To them, therefore, he attached himself, though the circle of his sympathies extended far beyond the pale of any denomination. He was allied to many minds by the bond of a common interest in various benevolent and intellectual objects. And to these connexions he frequently and fondly reverts in his

diary. It was his intention, and he had in fact prepared himself, to follow the business of a printer; but, as his native propensities unfolded, he readily yielded to their dictates, seconded as they were by a deep sense of duty, and prepared himself for the Christian ministry. The brief term of his practice in the profession was marked by the strong attachment of those among whom he labored, and, on the other hand, by the expansion and improvement of his mind and feelings. It was at about this period that he seems most perfectly to have enjoyed that quiet happiness and pure satisfaction, which the consciousness of usefulness and growth never fails to inspire. Possessed of good native powers, and having a happy share of the poetical temperament with an active and liberal spirit, he deservedly gained upon the affections of all with whom he was in any wise connected.

The Missionary enterprise in Africa was brought more immediately before Mr. Wright in his capacity of editor of a religious journal. He inquired and reflected upon the subject until it deeply interested him. He saw, in its prospective fruits, a rare combination of useful and happy results; and, in proportion as his mind delighted in contemplating the probable effects and present circumstances of the mission, he seems to have desired, and finally to have felt impelled, to make Liberia the scene of his efforts. There was much in this noble purpose which harmonized with his native sentiments, and every thing that his Christian principle approved. Yet he was not insensible to the dangers and discouragements of the undertaking. These he appears to have realized, in anticipation, to a remarkable degree, considering the vein of idealism which belonged to his very nature. The enthusiasm of philanthropy, while it rendered the distant prospect cheerful, did not blind him to the extent of the sacrifice he was about to make. On the contrary, his sufferings, up to the time that the plan was definitely arranged, were extreme; and the touching manner, in which he describes his last visits to the paternal roof and the habitations of his friends, evidences his sense of the privileges he was thus about to renounce.

"The feelings of Mr. Wright on this occasion, and subsequent to it," says the author, "may be inferred best from the following passage of his journal, dated at midnight of October 2d. — 'For a few moments, after an evening of confusion,

I am left alone to commune with my own heart. Yesterday I visited Malden, and bade my beloved friends farewell! Many were the tears we shed; and many the blessings they craved on my unworthy head. It was one of the most trying moments of my life. God bless this affectionate people! I cannot cease to pray that I may yet return to their embrace. This evening my friends have called to take their leave, and we have said farewell, and pressed many a trembling hand, until our hands and hearts both ache! I would have been spared this scene. Separation is a bitter drop in the cup of friendship, but the nectar is sweeter when the poison is no more. My mind I find wonderfully sustained at this moment; and I feel a longing for that hour when my feet shall press the blood-wet ground of Africa. Over the sepulchre of a thousand pleasing, fond realities, I must write —

"'The beautiful is vanished and returns not.'"

His voyage was safely accomplished; he had already begun to acquaint himself with the character of the people whom he hoped to influence; many events of interest and incitements to hope combined to cheer him, and his journal betokens the alacrity with which he commenced the work so long anticipated. A few weeks passed, and the partner alike of his joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, fell a victim to the African fever. Ere long he, too, sunk under a relapse of the same disease; to the moment of complete exhaustion evincing, by his own recorded thoughts, that resigned, hopeful, peaceful state of feeling which springs only from the "faith touching *all things* with hues of heaven." In view of such incidents, who will not sympathize in the beautiful termination of the volume?

"No! weep not for him! He but rose to his rest,
From his own loved land of the fervid line,
With his silvery sheaves of the dawn all gleaned
Ere bright dews blazoned the noon's decline;
He shall toil, with tears, in the gloom of a dim
Lone harvest no more; — oh weep not for him!

"And weep not for her! they have laid the dust
Of the early exile so softly away,
In the pleasant shade of the plantain-tree,
That the Judgment angels who seek that day
The jewels of glory, will scarcely stir
So sweet a slumber; — weep not for her!

"Weep not! In the home where the sinless meet,
Lingers no lonely yearning for *this*, —
As the pilgrims sorrowed (and smiled the while)
In dreams, o'er the visions of vanished bliss:
No sorrow enters that radiant realm, —
No mourning, no yearning; — oh weep not for them!"
— pp. 121, 222.

Such is the outline of this memoir. There are those, perhaps, who will behold in the enterprise of these missionaries a zeal which overcame even just discretion. They will deem it almost presumptuous for two individuals, natives of the Northern States, to have expected immunity from consequences like that which so soon and so sadly terminated their existence. Let it, however, be remembered, that Mr. Wright's devotion to the cause he had espoused was not only instinct with ardor; it was calm and deliberate. The purpose he cherished, and in the advancement of which he found a premature grave, was a holy purpose. And the fact, that his ministry of love was thus early consummated, his martyr's crown thus early won, should lead us, in contemplating his character, to think more earnestly upon its leading principle, upon that feature which death itself served more perfectly to develope, — we mean the spirit of self-sacrifice.

The devotion of self to something beyond self, and yet for the sake of self, this philosophy recognises as an universal law. The leaf which sinks into the earthy bed whence it originated, only to assume a renewed form of life; the dew-drop that cools the drooping petal only to be borne thence on a sunbeam to its parent cloud; the animal which loses its identity beneath the sod, only to pour into other channels its ever varying beauty and being, — all are but faintly typical of the sacrificial spirit of the universe.

And if we ascend to human offerings, the eye but dimly discerns the power, interest, and extent of sacrifice. The mother, what does she devote at affection's shrine? Is it nought but strength, ease, and time? How much more of feeling, serenity, and thought! The philanthropist, — is not his toil, weariness, and wearing-away, but as dust in the balance, when compared to the sentiment and inward energy which he profusely expends for man's welfare? The studious devotee, — number his hours of confinement, the

throbs of his aching brow, the beatings of his fevered pulse, and then descend into that excited, watching, sensitive spirit of his, and view the numberless visions of fancy, the eager yearnings of ambition, the unfathomable depths of desire, which people with latent disappointments, with restless and destroying elements, the inner-world of his idolatry.

A holy, fondly-nurtured hope is the sustaining principle; — the hope of eminent usefulness and honor; — the hope of standing among the moral heights of the world to draw down the renovating influences of heaven. And when such a hope is checked or extinguished ere fully accomplished, the philosophy of improvement bids us remember that the philanthropic impulse, the determinate spirit, the noble intent it is ours to cherish; the occasion will proceed from him who prompts the sacrifice.

The source and end of the self-denying principle consists in its relation to the highest forms of spiritual force and activity. It is identical both as an evidence and result with power, — power of the most exalted character. Nothing truly great was ever effected without it. And the vigor and prowess of that spirit is indeed untested, which is a stranger to the trial, the strength-giving, joy-enkindling influences of holy self-sacrifice.

NOTICES AND INTELLIGENCE.

The Sunday Library for Young Persons. Edited by the Rev. Henry Ware, Jr. — Vol. I. *The Life of the Saviour.* By Henry Ware, Jr., Professor of Pulpit Eloquence and the Pastoral Care in Harvard University. Second Edition. Cambridge: James Munroe & Co. 1834. 16mo. pp. 272. — Vol. II. *Lives of Philanthropists.* Volume I. John Howard. By Mrs. John Farrar, Author of "Congo in Search of his Master," "The Children's Robinson Crusoe," and "The Story of the Life of Lafayette." Cambridge: Brown, Shattuck, & Company. 1833 16mo. pp. 274. — Vol. III. *The Holy Land and its Inhabitants.* By S. G. Bulfinch. Cambridge: James Munroe & Company. 1834. 16mo. pp. 298. — These little books, as many of our readers know, make the first three of a series, edited by Prof. Henry Ware, Jr., having for

its object to furnish suitable and attractive reading for young persons on the Sabbath. The general object of the publication must recommend itself to every one who is desirous that the Sunday should be productive of useful and serious thoughts, without becoming burdensome and distasteful to young and active spirits. We believe the publication we are noticing will contribute essentially to this desirable end. The volume first mentioned, containing "The Life of the Saviour," is characterized by a winning style, which cannot fail to lead the most roving lamb of the flock to the great Shepherd, and to stamp upon the tender soul of youth a new and bright image of the Beauty of Holiness. The second volume, containing "The Life of Howard," must, we should think, seize upon the best feelings of the young, and interest them strongly in one who deserves to be ranked among the most devoted disciples of Him who "went about doing good."

As far as regards *subject*, we should say that the third volume has fewer advantages than its predecessors. Biography seems to be peculiarly suited to interest the young from the singleness of object presented to the reader's mind, and from the personal sympathy which is awakened, and which, if the subject of the memoir be truly amiable and worthy, is not only kept up but strengthened to the end of the book. Whereas in history and description there is of course more detail; the memory is more taxed; the feelings are less frequently appealed to and excited; what is realized by the young mind after the first perusal of such works is likely to be less in amount, than what is carried off by the most rapid reading of the Life of an amiable and worthy person. These remarks are not made in disparagement of Mr. Bulfinch's work. All subjects are not equally interesting, and no skill can alter this inequality. We look upon the third volume as a task-book rather than a pleasure-book; as containing what ought to be studied attentively, rather than what would be eagerly caught at by the young. It seems to be just such a book as is needed in our Sunday schools; and, if a proper set of questions were appended to it by the author, to be answered by reference to the work itself, it would be an excellent text-book for such schools.

The first part of this little work is occupied with the History of the Holy Land. We regret to find omitted in this portion the Scripture account of the patriarchs, especially of Joseph, of the extraordinary providence that raised him to distinction in Egypt, and made him the arbiter of the fortunes of his family, and, in an important sense, the founder of the nation.

The whole of this portion of Scripture is intimately connected with the general History of Palestine and the Jews, and, besides, the story has peculiar charms for old and young.

We think, too, that our author might, even at the hazard of swelling his book a little, have added with advantage more particulars respecting the destruction of Jerusalem in the war with the Romans, in order that his young readers might be compelled to admire the wonderful and exact fulfilment of the prediction of the Saviour.

Our author's style, without being peculiarly adapted to the class of readers for which he wrote, is marked by simplicity and elegance; and, if it does not evince any great tact in writing for the young, recommends him to the more mature of his readers as a good scholar and a man of taste. One who can write with so much purity and beauty, may venture to appear often before the public in the character of author.

Poems, by S. G. Bulfinch. Charleston. 1834. 12mo. pp. 108.— About the time that the work on Palestine which we have just noticed was published here at the north, this collection of poetical essays was handed to us from the south. It speaks well for Mr. Bulfinch's industry, that amidst his professional duties, which he has been discharging, as we are assured, to the great acceptance of his congregation in Augusta, Georgia, he has found time to prepare these volumes for the public, in the course of a single year. Several of the the poems, however, had appeared previously, in other publications; as, for instance, the Devotional Pieces, which were first printed in the author's "Contemplations of the Saviour." Mr. Bulfinch's poetry is sweet and flowing, often elevated and inspiring, always pure in its tone and effect, and imbued with a warm and rational piety. The first piece in this volume, entitled "Chivalry," is the longest which it contains, filling twelve of its pages. If we were better pleased with one portion of it than another, it was with the following beautiful strain near its close.

"There hath been Chivalry where arms ne'er came;
Its pure and ardent flame
Hath shed a halo round the warrior's crest,—
Hath burned within the patriot statesman's breast,
Nor less has warmed the peasant's humble cot,
And cheered the outcast's friendless, hopeless lot.
For what is Chivalry?
'T is self-devotedness;
A spirit urging onward and still on
To some high, noble object to be won;

And pressing still, through danger and distress,
Regardless of them all,
Till that high object, whatsoe'er it be,
Friendship, or virtuous fame, our country's liberty,
The improvement of our race, the happiness
Of one poor individual,
Or of unnumbered thousands, be attained.
We know it by the burning cheek,
The excited voice, the flashing eye,
Where common souls would coldly speak
Of some high purpose gained.
Such, such is Chivalry!" — p. 19.

The Youth's Letter-Writer; or the Epistolary Art made plain and easy to Beginners, through the Example of Henry Moreton. By Mrs. John Farrar, Author of "Congo in Search of his Master," "The Children's Robinson Crusoe," &c. New York: R. Bartlett & S. Raynor. 1834. 16mo. pp. 155. — If Mrs. Farrar had contented herself with laying down dry rules for the aid of young people who desire to be made acquainted with the mysteries of the "Epistolary Art," she might and doubtless would have produced a much more "complete" Letter-Writer than any of those treatises so called, which modestly assume to be complete; but still, as a collection of dry rules, it would necessarily have been a dry book. The work which she has actually presented to the youthful public of epistolary aspirants, is quite an entertaining book. By supposing a clever lad, Henry Moreton by name, on a visit to his uncle, and carrying him through the process of corresponding with his distant friends, under the guidance of that uncle and his family, she has given the subject a narrative and dramatic spirit, which causes it to take hold of the imagination and memory, and throws an agreeable interest round the folding of a sheet of paper and the nibbing of a pen. We therefore recommend the work, not only as the completest, but most readable Letter-Writer which is to be had at the bookstores.

Meditations for the Afflicted, Sick, and Dying. Boston. Samuel G. Simpkins. 1833. 24mo. pp. 216. — This is the fifth volume in the series of books which has lately been issued by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, Piety, and Charity. It is chiefly extracted, as we are informed in the Advertisement prefixed to it, from a work published at Edinburgh, entitled "*Farewell to Time, or Last Views of Life, and Prospects of Immortality.*" The editor expresses his persuasion

that it will be acceptable to the serious reader. We have no doubt that it will prove so. Without pledging our assent to all the sentiments contained in it, we hesitate not to name it as in most respects the best book for its purposes which has yet been offered to the Christian public.

An Universal History, in Twenty-four Books. Translated from the German of JOHN VON MÜLLER. In Four Volumes. Boston: Cottons & Barnard. 1834. 12mo. pp. 286 – 300 – 304 – 264. — Whoever would read history for the spirit of history, for the moral instruction which it conveys as well as for the facts which it preserves, will do well to study this compend by the celebrated Müller. Since the publication of this translation, we have referred to it in several places, and for the histories of different nations, and have always found information, conveyed in a lively and interesting manner. We have heard it intimated, that the author has not spoken of Christianity as a believer in that religion or its miraculous origin. We think the charge is wholly unsupported by the History itself; and we will give our readers an extract from the section on "Jesus Christ," that they may judge for themselves.

"After he had openly testified, in the most impressive manner, that no other completion of the hopes of Israel was to be expected, but this blessing which was destined for all mankind, through the medium of their traditions and system of worship, Jesus knew what he had to suffer from the disappointed vanity, and the selfishness and ambition of the priests, and foresaw with compassion the misfortunes which their prejudices would bring upon the nation. But as Providence by the direction of events had combined in him the most striking traits of the ancient prophecies, by which the Jews might know the Saviour of Israel, Jesus had no other purpose than the completion of his destination. Hereupon he was calumniously accused by his nation before Pilate, the Roman governor, and sacrificed by him to the factious spirit of the Jews. With greater than human fortitude he suffered death; he rose again to life, confirmed his words, and left a world which was unworthy of his presence.

"The work of the Author of mercy and love was completed; the root which he had planted, namely, the renovated doctrine of the patriarchs, in the course of a few centuries spread its shoots beyond the boundaries of the Roman empire, and, together with the veneration of his name, subsists in the most essential points even among the disciples of Mahommed; expiatory sacrifices, polytheism, and the belief in annihilation, have vanished from the greater portion of the human race; the more clearly the true nature of his doctrine is displayed to our view, when purified from the corruptions of calamitous times, the more deeply does its spirit penetrate into the foundations of society; many who have supposed themselves to be his adversaries, have la-

bored in the accomplishment of his plan; and after Christianity, like its founder, had long suffered abuse by priestcraft, every developement of our sentiment for moral goodness, and every successive advancement in philosophy, gives us new feelings, and opens to us more exalted views, of its true principles and inestimable worth."—Vol. II. pp. 30, 31.

The Story without an End. Translated from the German by SARAH AUSTIN. Illustrated by WILLIAM HARVEY, Esq. London. Published by Effingham Wilson, Royal Exchange. 1834.—The soul of childhood dwells in an earthly tabernacle, where is provided a resting-place, on which it may repose when it is weary,—unconscious even of itself, and where also is found a means of self-consciousness, on which it may look when the era of reflection comes.

But when this tabernacle is placed among the beauties of nature, the soul of childhood is attracted from its primeval repose, to go forth into the external world, and feast upon the simple and beautiful objects it finds; and when thus strengthened, it goes on under the guidance of ever active imagination, and communes with the light and the water-drops, the flowers and the birds and the tiny beasts, through the mysterious influence of that original sympathy by which God has wedded the soul to nature, in order that the affections of the soul may be touched, its intellect exercised, universal love be stimulated, and immortal hopes awakened.

Such is the hidden meaning which is symbolized by one of the most enchanting forms, with which imagination ever clothed spiritual facts. We will not anticipate the pleasure of the reader by giving him beforehand those details of the meaning of the several parts, which it is so delightful to feel breaking upon the mind from the symbols themselves. We will quote only the last passage, as a specimen of the beautiful English in which Mrs. Austin has set this gem from the German mine.

"And the child was become happy and joyful, and breathed freely again, and thought no more of returning to his hut; for he saw that nothing returned inwards, but rather that all strove outwards into the free air; the rosy apple-blossoms from their narrow buds, and the gurgling notes from the narrow breast of the lark. The germs burst open the folding-doors of the seeds, and broke through the heavy fissure of the earth in order to get at the light; the grasses tore asunder their bands, and their slender blades sprung upwards. Even the rocks were become gentle, and allowed little mosses to peep out from their sides, as a sign that they would not remain impenetrably closed for ever. And the flowers sent out color and fragrance into the whole world; for they kept not their best for themselves, but

would imitate the sun and the stars, which poured their warmth and radiance over the spring. And many a little gnat and beetle burst the narrow cell in which it was enclosed, and crept out slowly and half asleep, unfolded and shook its tender wings, and soon gained strength, and flew off to untried delights.

"And as the butterflies came forth from their chrysalids in all their gayety and splendor, so did every humbled and suppressed aspiration and hope free itself, and boldly launch into the open and flowing spring."

We are very glad to hear that this little work is to be republished in Boston. With all our books for the young, we have very few which address the faculty of imagination by giving words to nature herself. Thus children are rather turned aside by their own appropriated literature from that teacher, whose instructions it is the highest office of literature to turn into "thoughts that breathe and words that burn." This deficiency may be traced to that distrust of the soul and of nature, which, growing out of a superficial philosophy, for a long time has dried up the fresh waters of English literature in their fountains; — together with the fact, that the change of dialect and orthography which has taken place since the morning of our literature, has thrown its freshest products out of the reach of the young. Were Spenser in as plain English as Bunyan, it would probably be quite as much of a favorite with the young, as that masterly work, which has educated so many great men. As it is, "The Fairy Queen" is in a foreign tongue to them. Yet when it finds an interpreter, the effect on the intellect is so great, as to be another of the many proofs that none can speak to childhood more effectively than those gifted with the highest poetic genius. On poetic genius the forms of nature make the liveliest and deepest impression, and, pre-occupying the mind, prevent its being swayed by the conventional and factitious, even when the latter come to be perceived. And thus, through the laws of natural association, all the thoughts are symbolized, in forms and colors which mean the same thing to all human hearts and minds, and the more certainly in proportion to their youth and freshness. It is true that of such works, and especially of so subtile an allegory as this "Story without an End," children may not be able to give in their own words so distinct an account, as of an experiment in natural philosophy, or a narrative of historical events; but, on the other hand, they will need much less stimulus to take hold of them, and the impulse of pleasure will supersede that of duty; to say nothing of the fact, that there are other faculties of the intellect to be cherished into life, besides the mere understanding, and there are certainly qualities of the

heart and great moral powers, which may be reached and cultivated by the mysterious language of allegory, which are too much neglected in our common methods of education.

The English edition of the work that is before us, is beautifully printed, and illustrated by the designs of William Harvey, Esq., who seems to have caught the very spirit of the German author. We have seen children gaze on the dear little child as he sits wrapt in the quietness of primeval happiness; as he kneels to the instructive water-drop; as he sleeps in the moonlight with dreams hovering over him; as he walks among the sociable flowers; as the lilies and the notes of the nightingale sing their nuptial song in his heart; as, with the sincere attention of unsuspecting youthful inquiry, he listens to the utilitarian mouse and the sensually selfish lizard; as he wanders into the deep shades of evening, and sits down amid sweets that fill his imagination and senses; as he gossips with the fire-flies, and worships the stars; as he stands in the light of his innocence, unable to understand the deceiver and envious; as he gazes on the sunrise, and gives himself up to the song of the lark; and as he at last ascends into heaven. And again and again they would have them explained, and "would have been glad to hear more and more and for ever." We trust that the publishers of the book will not omit these pictures.

A History of the United States, from the Discovery of the American Continent to the Present Time. By George Bancroft. Vol. I. Boston: Charles Bowen. 1834. 8vo. pp. 508. — This first volume brings down our history to the restoration of the Stuarts. We trust that we shall receive from some one of our contributors such a review of it as its importance demands. In the mean while we feel it to be our duty, briefly to express our approbation of it, and delight in it. We have not perused it yet with that critical attention, which would qualify us to pronounce decidedly and comprehensively on its merits; but it appears to be executed with great fidelity and accuracy, and we are certain of the sprightliness and manliness of the style, and the deep interest which is kept up through the narrative. It is impossible to read the volume laggingly. It is impossible to read it without having our minds brought up closely and constantly to some of the highest questions which concern our country and all humanity. A fine spirit of philosophy pervades the book; a spirit equally of liberty and order, of universal charity and of serious faith. We think that at length Americans are to have a History. We hope that Mr. Bancroft will

be spared to complete his noble design. We are anxious to see the volumes which he promises, but we would not hurry him a moment. He is building a monument for himself, and for his country. For such a work he must take his time.

Rev. Samuel J. May's Letter to the Editors of the Christian Examiner, published in "The Liberator" for October, 1834.— We bear willing testimony to the eloquence, and what is still better, the good spirit of this Letter, although circumstances obliged us to decline publishing it ourselves. Mr. May was induced to write it by a paragraph which appeared in our July number of the present year, in a review of Professor Palfrey's Sermons, which charged the Abolitionists with interfering, in their ardent but mistaken philanthropy, "with the constitutions of civil government, and the personal rights of individuals." Against this charge, Mr. May defends himself and his coadjutors in the anti-slavery cause. Perhaps our paragraph was too hastily written, and too hastily admitted. Of the purity of Mr. May's motives in pursuit of his object, we never had the least shadow of a doubt. If we have done him and his friends any wrong, there is at present no other way for us to repair it, than to advise our readers to procure and read his Letter, and the documents to which it refers.

To Correspondents. It may readily be supposed, what is really the case, that among the articles which are offered by our friends for publication in this work, some will be, or appear to us, unsuited to our purposes, or not so well suited as others, and must therefore be, however unwillingly on our part, rejected. The authors of such articles will very naturally desire to know our reasons for not accepting them; but, occupied as our time is, it is impossible for us always or often to comply with that desire. We intend in future, to deposit those articles against the insertion of which we have decided, at the office of our publisher, Mr. Bowen, as soon as possible after our decision is made; where they may be had on application. If a writer should not find his article there, after a number of the Christian Examiner has been published without it, he may conclude, either that it has not yet been perused by the Editors, or that it has been accepted, and is awaiting its turn for publication.

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